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The Tahltan Indians

GEORGE THORNTON EMMONS

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The Tahltan Indians

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THE TAHLTAN INDIANS

BY

G. T. EMMONS

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INTRODUCTION

The Tahltan form the southwesternmost division of the Nahane, a branch of that great interior aboriginal family, variously known as Déné, Tinneh, and Athapascan, that ranges across the breadth of the North American continent almost from ocean to ocean, and is found under many varied conditions of territory and climate from Mexico to beyond the Arctic circle.

The Nahane, "People of the West," constitute an outpost of the Déné culture. They occupy, or rather roam over, that considerable area of northern British Columbia and the adjacent Northwest Territories stretching from the headwaters of Nass river to the uplands of the Mackenzie, and included between the Rocky mountains and the Coast range — a broad, broken plateau the drainage of which is distributed by three great river systems to the Pacific, Bering sea, and the Arctic. This great and almost inaccessible stretch is eroded by glacial action and rent by the convulsions of nature, and in parts is little known even to the resident native. The four divisions which constitute the Nahane are separate and distinct tribes, independent in government and in geographic distribution, but with only dialectic differences in their speech. In their mode of living they are similar to one another except where they have been influenced by their neighbors.

The Taku (who are to be distinguished from the Tlingit Taku), one of the divisions of the Nahane, occupy the basin of Taku river and its tributaries, and the lake region about Atlin, together with the southern sources of Lewis river; but within the past few years, particularly since the gold excitement of the Klondike, they have deserted their old villages and have scattered, some seeking work in the mining camps, others settling among the Tlingit Taku of the coast at Takuan, near the head of Stevens Passage in Alaska, while a few have joined the

Tahltan. The two eastern and northern divisions are known generally as Kaska, a corruption of the native name of McDane creek, a small affluent of Dease river, where these people assemble in summer to fish and trade. They are a primitive, nomadic people, hunters of big game, who wander in search of their food supply as changes of season demand. Their territory extends from Dease lake and Liard river to the Mackenzie mountains.

The Tahltan constitute the fourth division of the Nahane; they are centered about the upper reaches of the Stikine, and as far back as their traditions extend their dwelling places always have been thereabout. Their hunting grounds, however, cover an extended area, including the drainage basin of the Stikine and its tributaries as far down as the mouth of the Iskoot, the interlocking sources of the Nass, the lower half of Dease lake, and some of the southern branches of the Taku. The Nass region as a hunting ground was always in dispute with the Nishka, and was the cause of bitter feuds and disastrous wars that ever kept these two peoples apart. As an old Tahltan expressed the situation, "the upper Nass land is ours, and when we find a Nishka hunting there, we kill him." Rightfully the upper half of Dease lake was Kaska territory, but these more simple and primitive people, with little or no tribal organization, were dominated by the Tahltan, on whom in later years they were dependent for the products of civilization, particularly arms and ammunition, and so in time they have been compelled to share their half of the lake, and even their land beyond, along the river, with their more powerful neighbors. Their northern hunting grounds, bordering on the Sheslay and the Nahlin, were always in dispute with the Taku much as was the Nass region, and the right of might was the principal factor in determining the boundary at different periods. But to-day, with the decrease in population, the establishment of trading posts and the administration of law, peace reigns supreme, past differences are forgotten and the two peoples are as one. A strange over-

lapping of Tahltan and Stikine Tlingit territory occurred on the river from just below Glenora to Telegraph creek, a distance of some fifteen miles. Here the Tlingit claimed the exclusive fishing rights of all the salmon streams along the northern shore, and the ownership of the contiguous berry fields, leaving the main river, as well as all hunting rights, out of account. The value of these privileges to the coast people was of more than seeming importance, for while salmon which was their staple food supply, was even more abundant on the coast, yet the humid climate rendered the curing uncertain, whereas the dry atmosphere and continuous sunshine of the interior promised certainty; and the abundance of berries, particularly the soapberry and the cranberry, so esteemed for winter use, are not indigenous to the coast.

How or when this territorial claim originated or was established is wholly missing from the history of both peoples. Certain of the Stikine families of the Tlingit appropriated the interior trade and at prearranged times they ascended the river to or beyond Telegraph creek, where they met the Tahltan and exchanged the products of the coast, and later those of civilization for furs and caribou skins. This barter was mutually advantageous, and was a factor in the promotion of peace; but the better armed and more savage Tlingit was master of the situation and never permitted the Déné to penetrate to the coast country.

During the Hudson's Bay Company's lease of the Alaska littoral, a Tahltan chief wished to see a ship that was anchored off the mouth of the Stikine river. But permission to descend to salt water, and a safe conduct, were granted to him by a Stikine chief, only upon the payment of five hundred beaver skins. Some time after the establishment of Dominion authority at Glenora on the Stikine, the Tahltan protested against this encroachment of the coast people, and the waters were declared open to all. This would show that at heart the Tahltan never acknowledged the right of this occupancy, but through necessity accepted a condition that they were unable to combat.

The account of the Tahltan here presented was obtained during the summers of 1904 and 1906.

To the patient and kindly investigations of Doctor Frederick Ingles, resident physician and missionary among the Tahltan, and to Warburton Pike, Esq., of Victoria, B. C., I am under deep obligations, for much valuable information.

The illustrations are after photographs made by the author and from photographs and drawings of objects in the George G. Heye collection now in the University Museum.

THE TAHLTAN COUNTRY

The country of the Tahltan may be divided into two distinct physiographical and climatic areas each with its characteristic flora and fauna. The lower valley of the Stikine from just below Glenora to the coast, a direct distance of about eighty miles, is included within the coastal range and constitutes a region of great humidity, with leaden skies and an annual precipitation equalling if not exceeding that of the coast which reaches a mean of eighty-six inches. The snowfall thereabouts is excessive, and accounts for the extensive glaciers that fill the valleys; and long after spring has opened in the colder interior the lower river flats are covered with their burden of snow and ice. The general trend of the mountains is parallel with the coast, but the ridges present so little uniformity in direction, that the impression is given of mountains piled one upon another, a chaotic, rugged mass of rock with peaks reaching an altitude of eight thousand to ten thousand feet. The more equable climate and the constant rain induce a luxuriant vegetation. Forests of spruce, fir, cedar and hemlock cover the mountain slopes to the limit of tree growth, while in the river valleys cottonwoods grow to considerable size, and groves of alder and willow, with the devil's club and berry bushes, form an almost impenetrable barrier. Animal life is greatly wanting here. The mountain goat, the marmot, and bears of the brown and black species live in the mountains, while otter, beaver, marten, mink, ermine, porcupine, wolves, and foxes are found in limited numbers in the lower lands. Grouse, ptarmigan, eagles, ravens, and crows are the most numerous of the permanent feathered residents, while spring and fall are marked by extensive migrations of wild fowl about the water courses. It may be pertinent

to remark here, that this region which may be characterized as the wet belt has never been inhabited by either Tahltan or Tlingit in the sense that they have permanently occupied it and it is scarcely more popular as a hunting ground owing to its poverty and inaccessibility.

Beyond Glenora, which is at the inland limit of the coastal mountains, a wholly different character of country is found: one that approximates the more southerly dry belt of British Columbia. The land is rolling and much broken. The effect of glacial action is everywhere evident in the well rounded hills and the level valley floors of silt and clay through which the rivers have cut deep cañons. At many points the basaltic flow speaks of volcanic energies antedating the ice period. Here climatic conditions are localized by proximity to greater altitudes, for while about the Tahltan river there is scarcely any rainfall and the depth of snow hardly exceeds eighteen inches, beyond in the vicinity of the Cassiar mountains, the precipitation greatly increases. The extremes of temperature are very marked. The heat of summer, often reaching almost 100° F., is followed by excessive cold in winter when the mercury falls to −60° F. Spring opens in May, and ice commences to run in the streams in October. The rivers flow through narrow cañons so far below the land level that they do not water it and with scarcely any rainfall the soil becomes so parched that the possibility of raising the commonest garden produce becomes a question of irrigation. The tree growth is small and white spruce is the only available building timber. The black pine, spruce, aspen, white birch, alder, and willow commonly abound, while thickets of rose, service berry, and cranberry frequently occur. Much of the country presents the appearance of having been burnt over, and when open and not timbered the arid soil sustains but a sparse growth of grass and vines. This is a country of big game, and animal life is most abundant. Caribou and moose abound. The former has always consti-

tuted the principal food supply of the native, as well as his chief dependence for clothing and household and hunting implements. The mountain goat, the mountain sheep and the marmot are found on the higher lands. The beaver, fisher, mink, marten, and ermine are found about the rivers and lakes, and the grizzly bear and black bear, the wolf, the red fox with its varieties the cross, silver and black fox, the wolverene, lynx, porcupine, rabbit, several species of tree and ground squirrel, rats and mice are found everywhere. Of birds, grouse and ptarmigan are the most important from an economic point of view. This interior region is the home of the Tahltan, for while his permanent habitations may be few, he travels and hunts over the entire area and looks to it for his maintenance.

Salmon and trout are abundant in the rivers during summer and early fall, while whitefish are taken in considerable numbers from Dease lake.

HISTORY AND TRIBAL DIVISIONS

Historical data relating to the Tahltan are meagre. Prior to the Cassiar gold excitement of 1874, when the country was invaded by a horde of prospectors, the difference between them and the many other nomads of the great interior Northwest had not been recognized. As early as 1799 trading vessels visited the waters about the mouth of the Stikine, attracted by the furs from the interior. In 1834 the Hudson's Bay Company, keenly alive to the wealth of this section, made two ineffectual attempts to plant trading posts on the river for the purpose of controlling this trade. In that year John M. McLeod, a chief trader of the Company, following up the Liard river, discovered Dease lake, which he named, and crossing to the headwaters of the Stikine, reached the mouth of the Tuya. In 1836 a party was sent out from Fort Halkett to establish a post thereabouts, but returned without

accomplishing any results through fear of the hostility of a reported party of natives. In 1838, Robert Campbell, acting for the Company, spent the winter at Dease lake, but was so harassed by the coast Tlingit, who claimed the sole right to trade in this region, that the project was abandoned and no further attempt was made to reach the Tahltan directly until 1867, when a small store was established on the lower river by a French Canadian, in the interest of the Hudson's Bay Company.

At the time these earlier efforts were being made to cross the mountains from the eastward, the Company fitted out the ship *Driard* for the purpose of establishing a factory and a colony on the lower Stikine, but this attempt was frustrated by the Russian authorities at Sitka, who dispatched two armed vessels and hastily constructed a rude fort, which they named Fort Dionysius, on Etolin Island, where Wrangel now stands. The controversy that ensued was adjusted in 1837 by the lease of the Alaska littoral, which in 1840 was turned over to the Hudson's Bay Company, and the coast Indians continued in control of the interior fur trade. In 1861, "Buck" Choquette, a French Canadian, discovered placer gold in the river bottom below Glenora, which brought some white men into the country, and resulted in desultory prospecting until 1874, when the Cassiar excitement occurred, since which time the natives have been in constant contact with the whites, greatly to their disadvantage, as smallpox was introduced from the coast in 1864, and again in 1868.

In writing the term *Tahltan* I have conformed to the semi-official and generally accepted spelling, although Father A. G. Morice, in his "Notes on the Western Déné," says that it should be "*Thalhthan*, a contraction of *Thasaelhthan*, from *tha* or *thu*, water, and *saelhthan*, a verb that refers to some heavy object lying thereon."[1] I found widely divergent opinions regarding

[1] A similar explanation of its meaning was given to me by one of the older men of the tribe in relating the story of the origin of his family The discoverers of the land were two

the origin and derivation of the tribal name. The older people generally agree that it is from some foreign tongue, while others ascribe it to *thalla-a*, 'point,' from the first living place on the rocky tongue of land between Stikine and Tahltan rivers; and still others claim that it originated from the exhibition or giving away of a piece of steel, *thal*, by a chief at a great feast given at this point in early days, in celebration of the bringing out of his daughter. But the local name of this people was taken from the first settlement at the mouth of the Tahltan river. *Tutcher anne*, 'where the fish (salmon) jump up the little water' (Tahltan river), or, 'when the fish leave the water for the land,' referring to the stranding of the salmon as they work their way over the shallows in the smaller river. This term, contracted to *Tchaane*, was, I believe, used only among themselves, while *Tahltan* was a later designation from a foreign source that has become fastened upon them since the advent of Europeans. The coast Tlingit included them in the general designation *Gw-na-na*, 'stranger people,' just as the Tahltan call them *To-tee-hèen*, 'people of the water.'

The eastern divisions of the Nahane are said to be patriarchal in government, with but a loosely organized social system. It is probable that the Tahltan were originally the same; but at some later period they borrowed the social organization of their Tlingit neighbors of the coast, which is founded on matriarchy and is dependent on the existence of two exogamous phratries which marry one with the other and which supplement each other on all occasions of ceremony. These phratries are known as *Cheskea da*, 'one family raven,' and *Cheona da*, 'one family wolf,' and from their principal totemic emblems may be thus distinguished as *Cheskea*, Raven, and *Cheona*, Wolf. Of the former there is but one family, the Kartch-ottee; of the latter there are

women who met on opposite banks of Tahltan river near its junction with the Stikine It was the summer season when the salmon were running in from the sea. After the first greeting, one asked the other what it was that she saw on the surface of the water, and the other replied, "something heavy going up the little water," referring to the fish working their way up through the rapids of the smaller stream

three families; the Tuck-clar-way-tee, the Tal-ar-ko-tin, and the Nan-yi-ee. Besides the phratral crest which is the birthright of every individual, the subdivisions or families assume other emblems, which may be displayed to the exclusion of the former. In explanation of this subdivision among the Tlingit I believe that originally the phratries consisted of two families and that with the increase in numbers, parties went forth to seek new homes and in time took upon themselves the functions of independent families and assumed new crests while always retaining that of the phratry. Strange people coming among them took their places as separate families within the group.

(1). The Tuckclarwaytee claim to be the progenitors of the Tahltan people, and this is generally conceded by the other families. Their early home is placed in the interior country, about the head waters of the Nass, and after the flood—an epoch in the history of all the coast peoples—a branch of those who survived migrated northward and settled in the lake region where the Yukon has its source.

In after years two women, one from the sources of the Nass and the other from Tagish lake, wandered from their homes and met on the banks of Tahltan river at its mouth. The woman from the south said she had journeyed over a great sand country and that she was worn and tired, and now that she had met her sister of the north they would stop here and make their home, and that they would call themselves, from the region of travels, *Tuck-clar-way-tee*, 'back-sand family.' But the accepted meaning of this name by the several branches of this people that have settled among the Tlingit of the coast is 'the company from back (the interior), and in numbers like the grains of sand on the shore.' The Tagish woman walked with a copper staff, which she planted in the ground to mark their living place on the site of the present fishing village of *Tutcha n ne*, 'fish go up little stream,' for it was summer when the salmon were running in from the sea for spawning.

That these women found husbands in the land is a fact, but who the men were, and of what people, tradition does not tell and it matters not, as the offspring was of the mother and perpetuated her family only.

With the increase of population internal dissension arose, or the question of food became a problem, when separation was brought about by a party which went forth to seek a new home. They travelled down the Stikine until they reached a great glacier that spanned the river valley and blocked their progress. Here they encamped, and during a council that ensued, Koo-os-sick and Orn-os-tay, two very old women of high caste, together with two equally old men, arose and said that their lives were of the past and that they were of little use either to themselves or to others, and as it was a question of turning back or of following the flow of the waters under the ice bridge, they would attempt the passage and if successful all could follow. After being dressed as for an important ceremony, and sprinkled with the down of the eagle, the four embarked in a small canoe and drifted from the shore, chanting their death song which was taken up by those assembled on the bank, and their tiny craft caught in the swirl of the swift current was soon lost to view. The barrier was climbed, and as the canoe with its occupants was seen to shoot out from under the wall of ice a mighty shout was carried from man to man until those in camp knew that all was well, whereupon the canoes were quickly loaded and passed through in safety, and they continued their way to the coast. It is reasonable to suppose that from time to time other parties followed, and, on reaching salt water, pursued different routes; as this family is found among the Tongass people of Portland Canal, the Hootzahtarqwan of Admiralty Island, and the Chilkat at the head of Lynn Canal, the traditions of all of whom speak of a migration from the Stikine river.

How many generations or centuries ago this migration occurred is not known, and can be approximated only by the recession of the glacier that crossed the valley then and is

now so far separated from the opposite mountains. But to-day these offshoots are Tlingit in every respect, although among the Chilkat they seem to intermarry more frequently with the interior people of the Yukon basin than do any of the other families. This return to the parent stock is evident in the more characteristic Déné features, and while exceeding in numbers any other of the Chilkat families, they are held in low esteem, much as are all of the interior people by those of the coast. They are of *Cheona*, the Wolf phratry, and they hold this emblem in highest esteem, although they claim also the brown bear, the eagle, and the killer whale. I think it very probable that all three of these crests have been borrowed from the Tlingit branch of the family. It is certain that the killer whale must have been unknown to the early life of these interior people, who were never permitted to reach salt water, and it could have come to them only through intercourse with the coast tribes.

To-day the Tuckclarwaytee constitute the second most numerous family, and they possibly take the first place in point of wealth. They occupy eight houses in the village of Tahltan.

(2). The Kartchottee were the second people to reach the Tahltan country. They came first and collectively from the interior, and later and individually from the coast. The family traditions tell of a migration from the headwaters of the Taku, where they crossed overland from Narlin and settled on Tahltan river twelve miles above its mouth, where it receives a small tributary. They named this village *Thlu-dlin*, 'waters meet.' Living such a short distance away, they unquestionably at this period came in contact with the Tuckclarwaytee, and the union of these two branches was the foundation of the Tahltan people. One winter when a number of the men of the village were getting firewood on the mountain side, they were overwhelmed by a snowslide, which caused such consternation that the remaining inhabitants gathered their belongings and trailed overland to Six Mile creek, reaching the Stikine midway between

the present Telegraph and Glenora, where they built rafts and dugouts and followed the river to its mouth. Thence they continued westward until they reached the southern shore of Admiralty Island, where they established themselves and took their name, 'Belonging to Kartch,' from a fresh water stream that enters a bay at that point. The name is also said to be derived from *kartch*, 'bark,' from their primitive bark shelters. Later they crossed Frederick Sound to Kuprianof Island where they affiliated with the Kehkqwan, among whom they are still found in considerable numbers. In the course of time, through family dissension, a party retraced their steps eastward and joined the Stikine people about the mouth of the river, and of this body individuals have ascended the river from time to time and returned to the parent stock. A story told me by an old Stikine man says that in early days this family, to their great shame, were in the habit of enslaving the poor and orphans of their own blood, and that a chief so held a widow in bondage. He was then drying fish at Shek's creek, up the Stikine. The woman's duty was to care for the large travelling canoe, to keep it wet and covered with bark and brush, as these great dugouts quickly check when exposed to the sun. One day she neglected this, and her master made her kneel at the water's edge, fill her mouth with water, and squirt it over the canoe until it was well saturated. That night she escaped and wandered up the river until she reached a camp of the Tahltan. Here she married, and from the union came this later division of the family, and to-day when the Tlingit Kartchottee are angry with their brothers of the interior, they speak of them as the descendents of a slave.

Another version of the tradition of the return of the Kartchottee from the coast inland, tells of a chief of the Nanyiee of Wrangel, who had married a Kartchottee woman and with her daughter was fishing on the Stikine. The chief of the Tuckclarwaytee of the Tahltan stole her and took her to wife, from which marriage the other Kartchottee have sprung.

A branch of this family living on the Narlin, a southern

tributary of the Taku was called Narlotin; and in the early days possibly more Taku than Tahltan were spoken of as half Kartchottee, and they recognized the same totemic emblems. They have no existence as a separate family at Tahltan. Another division, purely local in character, that made its home on a great flat called Klabba, beyond the Tahltan river, took the name Klabbahnotin, but to-day no house name of this branch is recognized.

The Kartchottee belong to Cheskea, the Raven phratry, and recognize the raven and the frog as their emblems, one of which seems to be as much in evidence as the other, but I believe that the former is the older and possibly the more honored. The Kartchottee form the most numerous and influential family of the Tahltan tribe, a fact readily understood when it is remembered that they constitute the Raven phratry, while the other three families all belong to the Wolf phratry and intermarriage within the tribe can take place only between themselves and members of the other three families. They occupy eleven houses in the village. While in the past each family recognized only the authority of its own chief, in later years, with the decreased population, through mutual consent they have agreed on one chief to represent all, and the selection has fallen to the lot of the hereditary head of this family, known as Nan-nook. The same name or title was given by the Tlingit of Sitka to the early Russian ruler Baranof. It is said to be of Tlingit origin, meaning chief.

The Talarkotin are of interior origin, and while some say that they came from the Liard river country by way of the Dease, other accounts give them a still more easterly home in the Peace river valley. Their journey ended at the mouth of the second north fork, or Tuya river. This was in early days, when the land was young, and they, a mere handful of people, believed themselves alone. One day a Kartchottee hunter in following a game trail looked down from the high river bank and saw a tiny curl of smoke rising from the point of land at the mouth of the cañon. Crawling down the steep slope, he concealed

himself, and soon saw a young girl come out of a brush hut prepared for berrying. He followed her into the woods, and, overtaking her, either persuaded her to accompany him or carried her off to his village as his wife; and this third family was added to those already comprising the tribe. The name is said to be derived from *Tahlar*, the designation of a precipitous rocky point between the two waters, where they first settled, and hence they are known as 'the point people.' They are called also Karkarkwan, variously translated as point people, cañon people, and rabbit people; but this term is of indefinite meaning and is likely of Tlingit origin. They are of the Cheona, or Wolf phratry, and take the wolf as their crest. They are almost extinct, occupying but two houses in the village. Their pronounced Déné features seem to mark them from the other families as of purer stock, less influenced by mixture with the coast people.

(3). The Nanyiee constitute the latest addition to the tribal circle. Their coming has been rather a gradual drifting in of individuals, through intermarriage and trade relations from two entirely different sources—the Stikine and the Taku. This people originated in the interior, and travelling westward, reached the sources of Taku river which they descended to the coast. Their separation from the parent stock was the result of a family quarrel involving the young wife of a chief, the offending branch being forced to leave. On reaching salt water at Stevens Passage, they started south in two bands, which became separated, and later, on meeting, each inquired of the other as to its camping place. One answered, "Sick-nuh," while the other replied "Nan-yuh," whereupon they respectively took the names of *Sick-nar-hut-tee*, 'belonging to Sick-nuh,' and *Nan-yi-ee*, 'the people of Nan-yuh.' On the other hand it is claimed that the latter name antedates this incident and means 'those from up the River,' and this meaning is more generally accepted. The Nanyiee continued southward through Frederick Sound and the Dry Passage, and settled on the mainland just below the mouth of the Stikine river,

back of Etolin Island, by a waterfall, from which they named their village *Chu-Khass-an*, 'Waterfall Town.' They married with the neighboring peoples and became Tlingit, and in time reached the leading position in the Stikine tribe. In their hunting and fishing trips they ascended the Stikine until they reached Glenora, and finding an abundance of salmon and a favorable climate for the curing of their winter supply they pre-empted the streams thereabouts. The name of the hereditary chief, Sheks, was given to this camp, to which they returned annually. Whether or not the Nanyiee came in contact with the Tahltan before or after they had discovered the streams mentioned is not known, but trade relations existed between the two peoples before the advent of the whites, although it was greatly stimulated by the increased demand for furs after European trading vessels appeared on the coast. The advantage of controlling the valuable fur trade of the interior was readily appreciated, and the Tahltan were met for trade above Telegraph creek. This annual coming together resulted in intermarriage, and so the Nanyiee became established. They are also found among the Taku; and during the intervals of peace, when the two tribes met in friendly intercourse, individuals went from one to the other and by this means became members of the Tahltan people.

The Nanyiee belong to the Cheona, or Wolf division, and I believe this was their original crest, but those of the Stikine people assume the emblems of the brown bear, the shark, and the killer whale, which are accepted by the interior branch. They occupy four houses at Tahltan and number only a few families, but with the arrogance of their Tlingit blood they hold themselves superior to their neighbors.

Reviewing the events set forth in these family narratives, which, taken together, constitute all that there is of tribal history, it appears that at some early period a general westward movement prevailed among the interior people. It was not a wave of migration, as of a vanquished people fleeing before an

enemy, but rather a restless wandering of bands or families seeking new homes. The routes followed were naturally along the rivers and lakes until the headwaters of the Taku and the Stikine were reached. Here favorable conditions seem to have been found and permanent camps were made. No mention is made of any previous dwellers in the land, which seems to have been a wilderness, for of a certainty such small bands could not have prevailed against a resident population, and had they done so their songs and stories would be frought with the hero worship of these early days, whereas of this they contain nothing. With natural increase and the accession of new parties the westward movement was resumed down the rivers to the coast. Here they met the Tlingit, a more aggressive and virile people, among whom, through intermarriage and environment, they forgot the ways of the trail and the woods and became sea hunters and fishermen. Then in generations following when the coast and the interior peoples had come in contact, individuals drifted back to the homes of their forefathers, strangers to the mother tongue and the simple life of the Déné, bringing with them the superstitions and the traditions of the coast, together with the social organization and the elaborate ceremonials, that have for their end the glorification of family in the display of the totemic emblems. Intercourse through trade relations was likewise responsible for these changes, but in a lesser degree.

The Portland Canal People

Portland Canal is a narrow, deep arm of the sea, reaching inland almost a hundred miles. The shores are rocky and precipitous, rising to an average height of three thousand feet and exceeding this altitude in many places. Where there is sufficient soil to sustain life, coniferous trees cover the mountains from the water's edge to a height of two thousand feet. The melting snows supply numerous mountain torrents and small streams, and in summer a fair run of salmon seek these waters. During most of the year, however, it is a wind-swept, inhospitable shore, offering few advantages of life.

On the authority of James W. McKay, the former inhabitants of Portland Canal were an offshoot of the Tahltan who, toward the middle of the last century, wandered across the Coast range and thereabouts reached salt water. Now, the people referred to were clearly not of the coast, but from their roving habits and their language were of interior origin; yet the Tahltan of to-day claim relationship with them only through the Kaska, from whom they say they are descended, and they call them *Tseco to tinneh*. The writer visited this people in the summer of 1907, when the following information respecting them was gathered.

They are known to the Nishka as *Tsits Zaons*, but call themselves *Wetalth*. They claim that they originally comprised three totemic families, having for their crests the raven, the eagle, and the wolf. The first two families have become practically extinct, and of the other, called *Nahta*, there remain but four men, two old women, and one grown girl. Should the last not have issue, with the death of these the tribe will cease to exist.

The people of Portland Canal were dominated by the Nishka and the Tsimshian of the coast, and were harassed by the Tlingit of Cape Fox. By these tribes they were confined to the inlet, and even after the establishment of Fort Simpson they were not permitted to trade with Europeans. The Nishka claimed the trade of the Wetalth, meeting them at stated seasons and taking their furs in trade at their own valuation and giving them what they pleased of foreign products in exchange. In this way they were kept very poor, and little better than slaves; but this was the treatment accorded to all the interior people by those of the coast. They seem to have been nomadic within their restricted range, but this may have been an inherited tendency, undoubtedly increased by fear of their more powerful neighbors, and by their limited food supply. They sought the shelter of caves, many of which are found along the rocky shores, and in summer gathered about the salmon

streams. Their principal camping ground was about midway of the northern shore of the canal, and was known as Keneanokh. They claim to have been much reduced by the Tlingit of Cape Fox, with whom they were at constant enmity.

In 1885 the pitiful remnant of the tribe, twelve men with their women and children, weary of the struggle for existence, presented themselves at the then recently established Nishka mission village of Kincolith, where, through the influence and kind offices of Archdeacon W. H. Collison, they were allowed to settle and were practically received into the Nishka tribe; but the old prejudice against them as an inferior people has never been entirely overcome.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Tahltan cannot be said to represent a strictly homogeneous people. The infusion of Tlingit blood from the Stikine tribe of the coast is responsible for a type that is readily recognizable in the heavier build, the abnormally large head, and fuller, grosser features. As these characteristics, however, are not of frequent occurrence, they may be regarded as individual, and they seem to disappear in the descendants of mixed unions after two or more generations of return to the parent stock. The dominant type is Nahane. In stature they are below the average height, are symmetrical in form, and well proportioned; they are never fat, seldom stout, sinewy rather than muscular, with well developed straight limbs, small wrists and ankles, and correspondingly small hands and feet. The head is small and well rounded, and the face inclined to length, which is rather accentuated by the high cheek bones and less prominent though pointed chin. The forehead is moderately broad, rather low, projecting in a ridge over the eyes and receding upward. The hair is black and coarse, and in age gray, but never white. The eyes are small, black, and rather deep set. The nose is straight, or, in the purest type, aquiline, with a good

bridge and expanded nostrils. The mouth is full, with thin lips and perfect teeth. The complexion varies with mode of life: with exposure it takes on a dark brown, which is more noticeable in the men. The women, whose occupations are more indoors, are almost as fair as the European. In age the face becomes much wrinkled. While it was the custom formerly to remove hair growing on the face with pincers of metal or of bone, worn suspended around the neck, to-day a number of the older men have mustaches and straggling beards.

The senses are naturally well developed among a people whose hunter's life depends on their acuteness. The sense of sight, the most important of the senses to a hunting people, is among the Tahltan almost abnormally keen, not that the vision itself is of a higher order (indeed I think our eyes are stronger, and they unquestionably last longer, than those of the natives), for with the constant strain of sun and snow, and the effect of the smoke of the open fire, few reach middle age without some local affection of the eyes, and the older people usually suffer from some form of ophthalmia. But, to express the matter simply, they distinguish every object within the field of vision. Their eyes comprehend more, and are better trained and quicker to detect than are those of the white man. Hearing is developed to a high degree of sensitiveness owing to their habit of following the trails of animals. Living in the quiet of nature, they are conscious of the slightest sound The sense of smell of the Tahltan is possibly no more acute than our own, but as they depend on it to tell them many of the secrets of the woods, they cultivate it to a higher degree. Their power of endurance is great, and their vitality is surprising even in these latter days of their decline, when their constitutions have been weakened through disease and liquor. They are a fairly prolific race, and under reasonable sanitary conditions should survive. Two women were pointed out to me each of whom had borne ten or twelve children, and families of three to five children are commonly met with. Their principal ailment at the present time is pulmonary trouble, induced by the

changed condition of life within houses, and less nourishing food, aggravated by an undermining of the system through syphilis derived from the whites. After spending the winter in the field, living in rude shelters, they return to the village and shut themselves in their log houses, heated beyond the point of endurance and without ventilation. From the activities of the hunt and the strong diet of meat, they completely relax and gorge themselves with bread, sweets, and canned goods, which results in colds and indigestions that lay the foundation for organic diseases.

MORAL AND MENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

Honesty is so characteristic of the nature of the Tahltan that they do not look upon it as a virtue. They hold the cache inviolate, and when employed as hunters or packers by white men, they hold themselves responsible for the safe carriage and preservation of everything entrusted to their care. In disposition they are mild and peaceful, but when aroused by jealousy or offended pride they become taciturn and sullen. That they have been dominated to a certain degree by the more arrogant coast people seems natural when it is remembered that they were few in numbers and that they were wholly dependent on the tribes of the coast for arms and ammunition. Constant feuds with the Nishka and the Taku bespeak their courage, and in the hunting field their fearlessness has often been proven. Their ignorance of natural phenomena rendered them superstitious and engendered a childlike fear of the unknown. Affection for their children is very marked, and the older people are cared for when unable to provide for themselves. The peculiar totemic relations that divide the family so sharply and separate the children when grown from the father are unnatural and cultivate an apparent indifference that is difficult to reconcile with parental affection, but this in a sense is compensated by their total renunciation of self whenever the weal of the totemic family

is concerned. They are hospitable, and, while individually generous and grateful, their ethics require a return for every favor, even to assisting one another in time of need, and a present given requires a return of even greater value in order to preserve one's standing with the donor. The accusation that native people are always grasping and lacking in gratitude probably arises from our ignorance of their laws and customs, together with a misconception on their part of our business methods and means of existence, and their failure to understand why, from our apparent plenty, we should not give freely, believing that the white man's store is inexhaustible. Once in selling me a piece of native work an old woman asked me several times its value, and when I demurred, another woman said, "why do you not give her what she wants? You can get all the money you wish." When asked, "how do you suppose I get money?" she replied, "you write on paper and the money comes!" Hence the feeling of the more primitive people when they see the white man performing little manual labor, living in apparent luxury and possessing what appears to them unlimited means. An incident of small moment but illustrative of a generous impulse occurred when I was staying at Tahltan. It was in early summer, and the people were assembled at the fishing camps, only a few older people remaining in the village. The spring salmon were late in arriving but when the first one was speared it was brought to the village and was divided among the few older people. Native dignity marks their intercourse with one another, and with strangers an evident reserve. They are, however, sociably inclined, conversational after acquaintance, and, if kindly treated, very friendly. Few white men who hunt with them leave them without the kindest feelings and a full appreciation of their many excellent traits of character. Mentally they may be classed as fair; their rather isolated hunter's life during the greater portion of the year is not calculated to stimulate the faculties. Their occupation in the pursuit of game makes them quick to see and to act, and they

are sufficiently ingenious in contriving hunting and trapping appliances to insure the necessities of life. They are particularly receptive and adaptable, and they have so changed in the last thirty years that the present generation is not only ignorant of the life of the past but seems rather to scorn the old customs in its desire to be considered as the white man. They have little artistic sense or it is but slightly developed as is evident in their houses and belongings. Their implements are generally devoid of any attempt at ornamentation, and show no elegance of form. Rude etchings on bone in geometric lines filled in with red ochre characterize their highest idea of decorative art, except the beadwork of the women, which is attractive both in design and in the selection and placing of colors, and the pipes of the men, which are carved in animal figures and elaborately inlaid with haliotis shell, showing that there is at least some appreciation of the beautiful dormant in their nature.

GOVERNMENT AND SLAVERY.

While the recognized social organization of the Nahane was originally patriarchal in form, and remains so among the more primitive eastern branches, the Tahltan through intermarriage and association with the coast Tlingit, have adopted the matriarchal system whereby succession and inheritance follow directly in the line of the mother and remain always in the totemic family. Hence it would seem that substitution could never take place. The brother, the maternal nephew and cousin are successively eligible; but within these limits the chief is elected by the entire family, and the next in line may be passed over for one more eligible, though farther removed. Wealth and personal character are the principal factors. Women can not succeed to chieftainship. The custom both in the household and in the family is that the nephew on the sister's side should succeed the uncle and take the widow, his aunt, to wife, which gives her a home and provides for her personal needs,

for being of the opposite branch she can inherit nothing from her husband. To this end the nephew is given to the uncle in boyhood to be brought up by him. For the same reason children can receive nothing from the estate of the father. Hunting rights are the most important inheritance. The whole country is divided among the families, and subdivided among households and individuals; and while in travelling through another's territory one might kill an animal for food, the pelt would be given to the landowner. Boys have the privilege of the father's hunting ground while they are recognized members of his household, that is, before reaching manhood; but after that period they exercise the rights of their mother's family. After marriage a man is permitted to hunt in the country of his wife's direct family as well as in his own country, and on this account plural wives are taken for the advantages they may bring.

The chieftainship even of old was more a position of honor than of power. In time of peace a chief represented the family, within which he arbitrated all disputes, and took precedence on all occasions of ceremony. He was accorded the place of honor at feasts, and received proportionately the greater number of presents. Generally of larger means than his fellows, his following was thereby increased, and he was the recipient of service and presents from his household, but he hunted and worked as did others. His obligations to the poorer and dependent members of the family were recognized. In case of war his counsel was sought and, age permitting, he was the logical leader. Each family was a distinct organization, controlling its internal affairs, recognizing only the authority of its own chief, and meeting the other families on common ground.

Councils, either tribal or family, were attended by the chiefs and the older men, although the family councils were more general in their character and attendance. Few happenings were regarded as personal where they occurred between members of different clan divisions, as the social organization was such

that the act of the individual involved the whole family. In the discussion of such disputes after the family had met and considered a line of action, the chief of the aggrieved party would go outside and announce his position in a loud voice, as if speaking to the air, addressing no one in particular, and when he had concluded he would enter the lodge again and remain silent. Then the chief of the other family would act in the same manner, stating his side of the contention. In this manner the case was argued to a settlement.

With the decrease in numbers after their removal to their present village, the Tahltan met as a community and elected one chief to represent all. He is the hereditary chief of the most numerous family—the Kartchottee—and is addressed as *Nannook*. His office is recognized by the Department of Indian Affairs and on his decease his successor will be appointed by that department.

There are two recognized classes among the Tahltan, the aristocracy and the common people; but the line of demarcation is not very distinct, and while the accumulation of wealth, the giving of an elaborate feast, and the distribution of much property may elevate the one, continued poverty through several generations will not wholly reduce the other. There is no warrior class, nor do any secret societies exist. The shamans are wholly individual: they neither come from nor form any particular class.

Slavery existed in the past. Captives taken in war with the Nishka and the Taku were held in bondage, but could be redeemed at any time. Tlingit and Kaska were never enslaved, probably by reason of the mutually advantageous trade relations existing, and the more or less frequent intermarriage. Slaves were purchased from the Tlingit, who procured them from the Haida; they were generally Salish, Kwakiutl, or Vancouver Island natives taken by those island pirates in their forays along the coast. The value of a male slave was one hundred beaver skins; of a female, fifty beaver skins. Slaves could marry

among themselves, but the children were slaves. If the head of a household should die or if a child should be seriously hurt, a slave might be freed in honor of the dead or in propitiation for the weak. On the death of a chief, one or more of these unfortunates might be killed in order that their spirits might attend the spirit of the departed in the future life. This was accomplished by laying the victim on the ground with his neck resting on a log; a small tree trunk was then placed over his neck, which was broken by several men jumping on the log. The body was usually thrown in the river, but if the slave should have been an especial favorite, his remains were cremated. Slaves worked and hunted for their masters. As an institution I believe that slavery was borrowed from the Tlingit, but the Tahltan did not own many slaves. Their continual hunting in small bands, their poverty, and their mild disposition all militated against extensive slavery.

VILLAGES

From a purely nomadic people the Tahltan might in theory now be termed settled, inasmuch as they have built a permanent village of substantial log houses after the manner of the whites. But it must not be inferred that they are to be found resident there during any extended period of the year; indeed their comfortable houses seem to be but an expression of their desire to be considered civilized, while at heart they are wanderers as were their forefathers.

Of necessity their hunter's life keeps them in camp from September until April; then with the first warm days of spring they become restless and go forth from the confinement of the house to the freedom of tent life, and in June, when the first salmon run in from the sea, they seek the fishing villages where they remain throughout the summer. So in truth their houses are little more than storage depots, marks of social standing, and meeting places for feasts and ceremonies. Shortly

after the Cassiar gold excitement in 1874, the Tahltan built a modern village, on a slightly elevated plateau, a mile and a half to the northward and westward of the mouth of the Tahltan river. The older settlements were deserted, and the entire

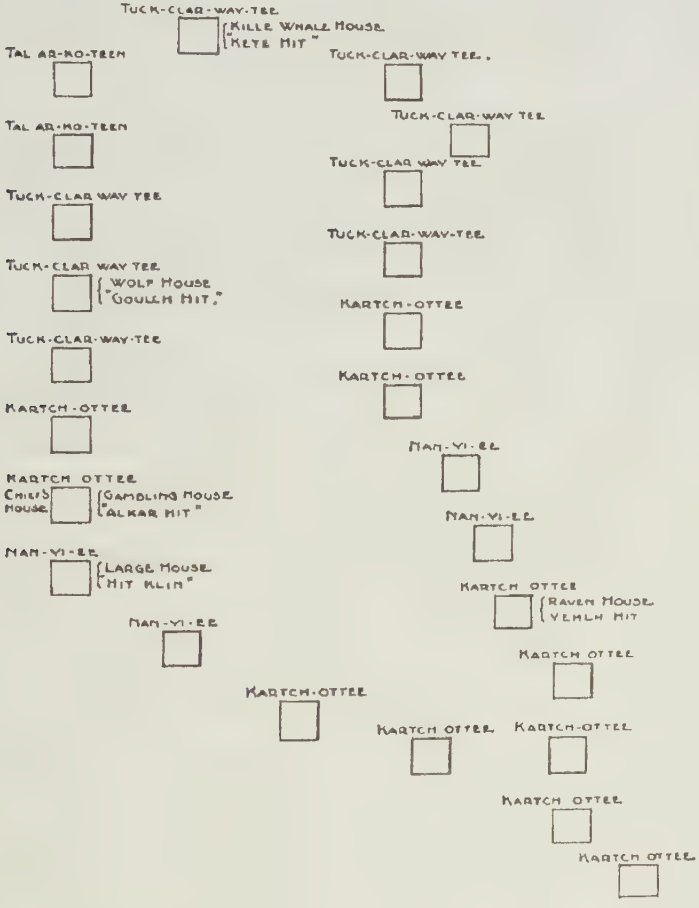


FIG 1.—Plan of Tahltan village.

tribe, now much reduced in numbers, assembled there. To-day this is their only living place, although many of the younger men and those who are employed by the trading companies at Telegraph creek are building small log houses there, while they still retain an interest in the tribal village.

The earlier villages, some of which are still remembered by the older people while others are known only by name, centered about the upper reaches of the Stikine and its two northern tributaries, the Tahltan and the Tuya, and beyond on the Shesley and the Narlin, southern branches of the Taku; but these last named waters in early days were properly within the territory of the Taku people. The lower valley of the Stikine, while hunted over, was never inhabited. The village sites were selected wholly on account of their proximity to favorable fishing sites, as the swift streams rushing through narrow cañons offered few points where fishing could be carried on advantageously. To-day little remains to mark these places save a decayed grave post or a more luxuriant growth of berry bushes and grass.

Possibly the first settlement was *Teetch ar-an-ee*, 'fish go up little water,' on the southern bank of the Tahltan near its mouth, where the present fishing village stands. On the bluff above, some old grave posts are still visible. Several miles beyond on the rock ridge that separates the two rivers, was what is believed to have been the most important village, *Tsa-qu-dartsee*, 'rocks move,' so-called from the friable character of the cliff, the face of which was constantly crumbling and falling off. In the constantly recurring wars with the Nishka of the upper Nass this village was destroyed.

Another very old settlement was situated a few miles above the last, on the southern bank of the Stikine at the mouth of a small stream; but this is only a memory.

Thlu-dlin, 'waters meet,' was the first living place of the Kartchottee family. It was on the Tahltan river, some twelve miles above its mouth, and was deserted, as related in the family traditions, after many of its men had been overwhelmed by a snowslide.

The Tahlarkotin first settled at the mouth of the Tuya, but all knowledge of any settlement there is lost to the present generation.

There were several villages at different periods up the Tahltan. The earliest belonged to the Tuckclarwaytee family, but sickness came to the inhabitants about six generations ago, when, with the death of the men, the remaining women married Kartchottee, hence to-day this latter people have become the possessors of these fishing grounds.

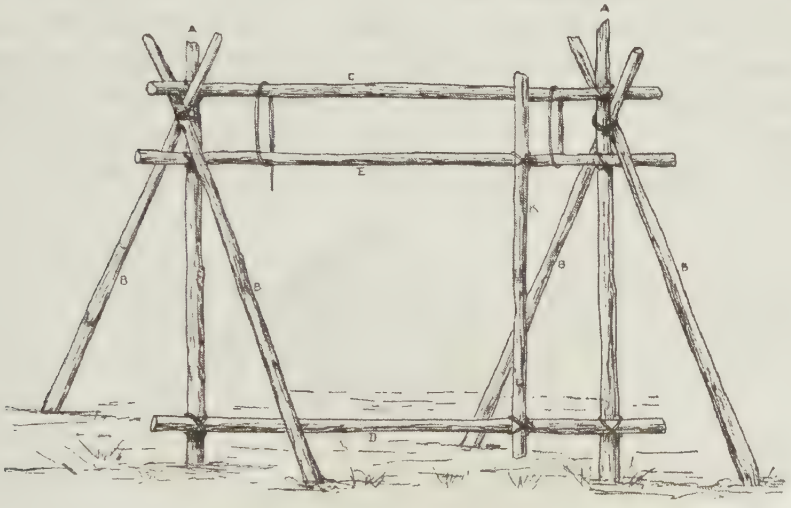


FIG. 2.—Skin-dressing frame.

At Nine Mile flat, on the Stikine river, the Tahltan assembled in summer to fish, and here they met the Stikine Tlingit to trade. A peculiar separation of the rock from the shore forms a shallow channel through which the salmon came up stream and were easily taken, whence the name *Tra-tuck-ka*, 'rock crack,' was given to the camp. This was also destroyed by the Nishka.

Across the Stikine, on the southern bank, was another fishing village, where the use of the long weir was permitted. This was called *Gi-kah-ne-gah*, from *ge-de* the name of the fish basket.

At Ten Mile creek, on the southern bank of the Stikine, was a later meeting place for trade with the Tlingit.

The villages on the Narlin and the Shesley were more Taku than otherwise in early days, but in 1840 the Taku Tlingit of the coast came up the river and destroyed Kahgitzah near the head of the Shesley, when the remaining inhabitants crossed the stream and joined the Tahltan.

Smallpox was introduced from the coast to the interior people several times during the last century, and the Cassiar mining rush that swept the country in 1874 proved most disastrous, reducing the population to such an extent that to preserve their identity they found it necessary to unite in a single community. This is their present village, commonly called Tahltan, but by themselves known as *Goon-tdar-shage*, 'where

FIG. 3.—Grave house.

the spring water stops,' or, 'at the mouth of the spring,' on account of a small spring, at the upper end of the village, that bubbles out of the ground, flows a few rods, and is lost. It is this spring that affords the villagers their supply of drinking water. The ground plan of the village is a parallelogram, the houses surrounding an open space where public meetings and ceremonies are held; but this has been slightly interfered with toward the upper end, where the ground rises more abruptly, causing the houses to straggle somewhat (Fig. 1). The dwellings are

of spruce logs, neatly laid, dovetailed or notched at the corners, the joints between chinked and plastered with mud. The roof consists of a frame of fore-and-aft beams resting on the gable ends, and a ridge pole, which support saplings following the pitch and placed close together, over which are laid slabs of spruce bark covered with two or three inches of mud. The poorer houses have only a hard earth floor, but in the better structures hewn planks are laid a foot or two above the ground with small cellars for the preservation of food during the winter. Originally there was a central fireplace, and a corresponding smoke hole in the roof, but to-day large cooking stoves are in universal use. A central doorway and a window or two in the front or the sides complete the house. The interior is without partitions; the sleeping places of the several families in the larger houses are separated from each other by boxes or trunks containing their personal effects. While of late years tables, chairs, and even bedsteads have been introduced by the more progressive element, yet the simple furnishings of more primitive times are found among the older people. These consist of skins and furs for bedding and covering, boxes and chests procured in trade from the coast people for the storage of blankets and clothing, and rugs of many small pieces of skin of the leg of the caribou and the moose, sewn together. About the walls hang snowshoes, clothing, guns and other articles of the chase. In the rear of each house is a small storehouse of logs for various objects not in immediate use, as furs, traps and the like. Per-

FIG. 4.—Grave house.

manent dressing frames (Fig. 2) for caribou and moose skins are set up in convenient places back of the dwellings, also light frames for smoking the dressed skins. Winter kennels for the dogs consist of low log structures approximating eight feet square, earthed over and having the appearance of caves with only the front logs showing (Pl. VI, C). The grave houses (Figs. 3, 4, 5), in the character of family vaults in which are deposited the chests or trunks containing the charred bones of those cremated, consist of small box-like structures with one or more windows, and in several instances ornamented with painted or carved fronts representing the totemic emblems of the family. These grave houses at Tahltan are on the hillside in rear of the houses, but at Telegraph creek they rest on the high bank of the cañon. The latter type is clearly Tlingit, both in architecture and in ornamentation. Older and more characteristic graves are to be seen on the bluffs overlooking Tahltan river; these are marked by rude mortuary columns, and cribs of logs on top of which are placed the chests containing the cremated remains.

FIG. 5.—Grave houses.

In summer temporary brush shelters are erected in the rear of the houses by those who remain in the village; here the fish are cured, the cooking is done, and the daily work is carried on, for instead of being a necessity, the house is still a luxury, and heredity asserts itself in the love of the open, which has been the Déné mode of living through all time.

HABITATIONS

The primitive habitations of the Tahltan (Pl. VI, D) were lean-to shelters and oblong tent-like structures, framed of poles and covered with slabs of spruce bark and willow branches weighted down with a few heavier poles Generally two lean-tos stood a few feet apart, opening toward each other. The passageway between remained open in summer, but in winter it was closed with brush at one end, while the other served as the entrance. The fire was built in the middle under the opening; the ground within was strewn with pine branches. The pack bags, bundles of food, furs, and personal effects were piled around the interior, forming protective walls. Caribou, moose, and sheep skins in the hair, simply scraped clean on the under side, served as beds; and robes of marmot, lynx, fox, and squirrel were used as blankets. Snowshoes, snares, and implements of the chase were suspended from the pole supports out of reach of the dogs. Lean-tos such as hose described are in general use to-day in the field, except that cotton drilling (Pl. VI, B) has superseded he primitive roofing of bark and boughs.

The earliest type of house, according to the testimony of the older people, was similar to that still found in the fishing villages. This is in the form of a parallelogram, the framework consisting of four corner posts with two central higher ones between at either end. The posts are rudely hewn tree trunks, about a foot in diameter, grooved at the top to receive the rounded beams that extend lengthwise and support the roof. The walls are of saplings, from three inches to five inches in diameter, driven into the ground and fastened along the top to a pole by a twining of willow bark and twigs, and secured also at intervals to the roof beam resting on the corner posts. The roof frame rests on the ridgepole and the two side beams, and is crossed at every foot or two by poles placed lengthwise and lashed to them with withes of willow bark; and over all are laid spruce bark and brush which is held in place with small tree trunks.

The doorway consists of a narrow opening at one end of the structure, and a movable gate keeps the dogs out. The earthen floor is sometimes covered with hewn planks, but more generally it is strewn with pine branches, on which the skin bedding is laid. There is a central fireplace with a hearth of gravel, and a smoke hole in the roof. As such structures are very open a lean-to is often set up within on either side of the fire. These houses serve the double purpose of shelter and smokehouse. Additional interior posts support beams across which rods are laid as a rack for split fish; while from the roof are hung other poles and cross-pieces in several tiers which the fish successively occupy in the process of curing, those freshly caught being placed over the fire, while those the most cured form the highest tier directly under the roof.

Caches for storing food (Pl. VII, A) for winter use and for containing household belongings have always been a necessity for protection against the ravages of wild animals and the dogs. These are substantial log cribs built on posts well above the ground, and are entered by means of notched tree trunks which are removed when not in use. On old village sites, and sometimes at a distance away in the woods, one may still see square excavations that resemble cellars. These were the salmon caches, in which the fish were stored in the late fall for winter and early spring, for both people and dogs. They were covered with logs, boughs, and earth, so that if the village should be sacked by an enemy there would still remain this hidden source of supply. In the present village of Tahltan, in the rear of each house, is a smaller substantial log building containing odds and ends and all material not in immediate use.

The sweat bath (Pl. VI, A) is a common necessity. The sweat house is a temporary affair, erected at a few moments' notice, consisting of a dome-shaped frame of small branches cut green, stuck in the ground, bent over, and lashed with bark. In use a fire is kindled within or near by, thoroughly heated boulders are introduced, and the fire having died down, skins or blankets

are thrown over the frame and steam is produced by throwing water on the heated stone. Urine is used as a solvent in cleansing the body after long journeys or hunting trips.

DIVISION OF TIME

Time is reckoned by moons corresponding to our months, which are characteristically named from the weather conditions or from the habits of animals. The calendar year commences with October. The Tahltan names for the months or moons are as follow:

October,	*Men ten tchet ly,*	Little cold. (Little ponds get ice)
November,	*Men ten tche,*	Big cold. (Big lakes and rivers freeze)
December,	*Ghar u wue sa,*	Rabbit eats quickly. (Meaning the days are getting short)
January,	*Sartses lar,*	Bad (weather) moon. Also Middle (of year) moon.
February,	*Den o tenna,*	Little crust comes on snow.
March,	*Iht si sa,*	Wind moon South wind comes.
April,	*Khlee ten narsa,*	Dog runs over crust on snow. Dog barks.
May,	*Ih a zee e sa,*	Running moon. (Animals come out of winter houses and travel on loose snow.)
June,	*A ya ze sa,*	Young (born) moon.
July,	*A chi zee sa,*	Molting (birds) moon Geese molt.
August,	*Da deah e sa,*	Groundhog gets white hair Animals fatten.
September,	*Hos talh e sa,*	Groundhog in prime condition. She animals getting fat

LIFE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The routine of life is carried on from year to year with little variation. Commencing with the fall, when the fishing season has come to an end and the animals have fattened and have

taken on their winter coats, the hunting season begins. The natives return first to the village, the dried fish that is not required for use is cached, traps and snares are gathered together, winter clothing is stored in the pack bags, and when all is in readiness they set out for the hunting grounds by families, generally two together, with all the dogs. Men, women, and children, to the extent of their ability, carry back packs, and the dogs saddlebags. Having selected a favorable locality, they make camp and hunt and trap thereabouts until the game has become scarce, when they shift their camp, and so continue throughout the winter; but it is now the custom to return to the village about Christmas, and to go out again later for the early spring hunting, after which they come in with their stock of furs, and the trading commences. This is the time of sickness and excesses, for after months of hard work and of healthful living in the open, they shut themselves in their badly ventilated, overheated houses, and with immoderate eating and complete relaxation they become susceptible to colds and to digestive troubles that weaken their constitutions and often sow the seed of chronic diseases. With the first warm days of spring they become restless and prepare for tent life, and by the middle of June, with the coming of the salmon, they are settled in the summer fishing villages, where they remain until September This is the season of ease and enjoyment, for fishing is a mere pastime after the winter hunting. The weather is delightful and fish, together with many varieties of berries and roots, prove a healthful change from a continuous diet of meat. This being the only period when the members of the tribe are brought together, social functions are in order, but to celebrate them they return to their permanent village for the while. The close of the fishing season is generally selected for such events.

HOUSE LIFE

The division of labor by the sexes is clearly defined, although men and women do not appear unwilling to help one another whenever circumstances require. The man is the provider. He hunts, traps, fishes, brings in the game, removes the skin, builds the house, constructs the camp, erects the skin-dressing frame, fashions the household utensils and his hunting and fishing implements, working tools, and the snowshoe frame, and in travelling carries a pack. The woman cares for the children, prepares and cooks the food, tans the skins and makes them into clothing, including the carrying bags of skin and netting, cuts the babiche for nets and snowshoes, and fills in the latter. She cares for the house and the tent, keeps the bedding dry and in order, provides the water, and usually furnishes the firewood. The children render cheerful assistance to the parents, those too young to hunt or to do laborious work, care for the smaller children. The older boys hunt with their fathers and look after the snares and traps, while the girls assist their mothers in multifarious domestic duties. No attempt is made to teach the children; they learn by observation and through contact from the earliest age, and they play and work with equal cheerfulness.

The position of the woman is perfectly assured, and while her work is arduous and never ceasing, her influence in the household is unmistakable. This is especially evident with the older women, whose advice is sought on all occasions involving an exchange or a sale. The woman usually acts as the family treasurer and holds the purse strings. The relations existing between husband and wife are particularly happy as a rule, they appear to be affectionate, and reasonable in their treatment of each other, although they are not demonstrative. The devotion of the parents to the children is most noticeable, and they certainly merit it. Corporal punishment is uncommon; indeed, even in the quarrels of adults, they never come to blows: they may talk or they may kill, but they regard a blow as an unworthy act.

CLOTHING

Primitive clothing passed out of use with the Cassiar invasion, but even before that period the Hudson's Bay blanket was the staple of trade with the coast natives. In neither of my visits to Tahltan, although I ransacked every house, could I find a single piece of aboriginal wearing apparel, aside from fur blankets, moccasins, and mittens, which are still in common use. From the testimony of the older people, the dress of the men was of tanned skins of the caribou, the moose, and the mountain sheep, and consisted of a shirt reaching just below the thighs, trousers either reaching to the ankles or having feet attached, moccasins, mittens, and a cap of fur.

The shirt for general wear was ornamented usually with fringe along the seams of the body and the sleeves. The trousers sometimes were similarly ornamented and were confined below the knee with a garter. In cold weather fur shirts were worn.

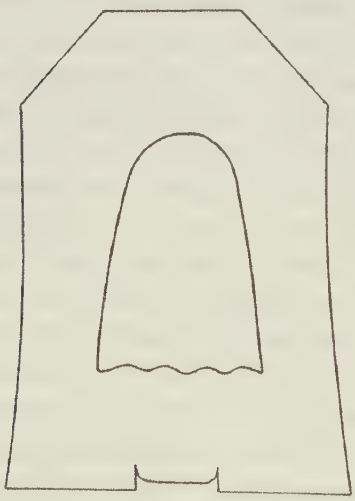


FIG. 6a.—Pattern of Tahltan moccasin.

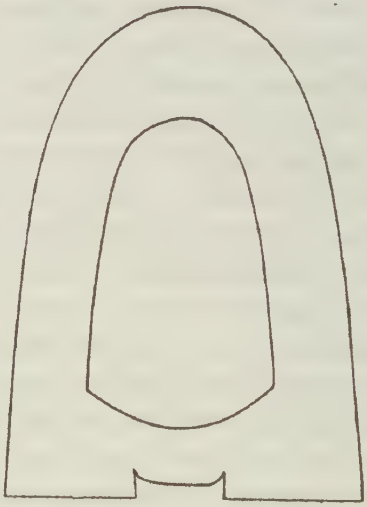


FIG. 6b.—Pattern of moccasin used by the Tahltan but borrowed from the Kaska.

The moccasin is the one article of clothing that has survived the period of change and is in general use to-day (Fig. 6). It is

made of moose or caribou skin, with a high flap to protect the ankle, and is provided with tie strings which are passed around several times. In winter marmot skins with the fur side inward are used. Two styles of moccasins are worn, distinguished from each other by the form of the toe. The square-toed moccasin is essentially Tahltan, while that with the pointed toe was borrowed from the Kaska. The trailer is rectangular and is much the same in each kind. The ornamental feature consists of a tongue of cloth, generally red, worked in beads or in colored thread. In earlier days the decoration was in colored quillwork.

Mittens of caribou skin, ornamented around the wrist-piece in quill embroidery or with colored cloth worked in thread or beads, are attached to each other by a band worn over the shoulders to prevent loss. Gloves and gauntlets are much used to-day, but these articles are not aboriginal and have been borrowed from the whites.

In old times the cap was of the fur of the fox, marten, marmot, or one of the smaller animals, and was tight fitting. The more decorative clothing worn on ceremonial occasions and by the chiefs was ornamented with a yoke of porcupine quill embroidery on the shirt in front and similar bands down the trousers, and garters of embroidery or of wrapped quillwork. The fringe of such shirts about the border and seams was very fine and was wrapped with colored quill at the base. Red ochre was much used to color the fringe, and for marking a line around the border, but it was superseded by vermilion, and in like manner beads took the place of quill embroidery.

The clothing of the women was of material similar to that of the men and differed from it only in length, the principal garment assuming more the proportions of a dress. In severe weather every woman was provided also with a skin blanket of fox, lynx, marten, ground squirrel, or marmot fastened about the neck with tie strings and around the waist with a belt. The finer blankets were bordered in front with a strip of caribou skin, often ornamented in quill or bead embroidery. The pads

of the fox and the lynx were made into blankets for wear and as covers. Rabbit skins were used for the dress of the children. Blankets of marmot and other furs were universally worn around the shoulders by both sexes and all ages in camp when the weather required, and are still used by the older people.

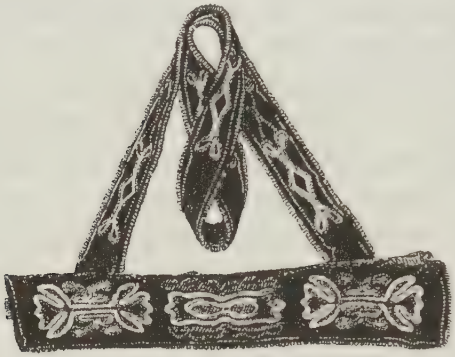


FIG. 7.—Cartridge belt worn in the winter dances.

A girl on reaching the age of puberty went into confinement and could appear in public only when dressed in a skin robe worn over the head and reaching to the ground, thus concealing her from view.

The principal ceremonial apparel found among the Tahltan had been procured from the Tlingit, and includes Chilkat blankets, the distinctive chief's headdress consisting of a carved wooden mask surmounted by sea lion whiskers and a train of ermine skins pendent behind, the carved raven rattle of the coast, and the Hudson's Bay Company's blue blanket bordered with red cloth and trimmed with pearl buttons. But these articles were found only among the wealthy who ascribed to them a fictitious value. Articles of their own design and workmanship are confined almost entirely to embroidered cartridge belts (Fig. 7), knife sheaths, and bags for suspending from the neck. These are of caribou skin or of colored cloth ornamented with colored beads. In addition they wear crowns of grizzly bear claws, the skins of the heads of animals (Fig. 8), ornamented fur caps, and eagle feathers. I saw but one cloth shirt ornamented in colored beadwork, one blanket shirt decorated with lynx teeth, and another shirt made of the pads of the black fox trimmed with colored silk. Eagle tails, often colored red, are carried in the hand. I found one very beautiful belt, worked in colored

quill with a fine fringe wrapped with quill, which was a piece of dance apparel, and might have been procured from the Kaska or the Liard people, who excel in such work (Fig. 9).

FIG. 8.—Dancing headdress made of the skin of the head of a young caribou.

Necklaces of bone and glass beads, dentalium, beaver claws, and lynx teeth were formerly worn by the women but to-day they are rarely found in use. Bracelets of silver procured from the Tlingit have superseded the older ones of horn, brass, and beads. Finger rings of silver from the same source are still worn by the women. In the case of both sexes, on the day of birth or shortly afterwards the lobe of the ear and the septum of the nose are pierced—formerly with a sharpened claw or bone awl, later with an iron point—and a cord of sinew is inserted to keep the aperture open. Later in life the helix of the ear of the man may be perforated at one, two, or three points, according to his social position. On ceremonial occasions an ornament of bone, or of dentalium or haliotis shell, or a silver ring, is worn through the nose. Pendent from the lobe and from the holes in the helix of the ear, dentalium and haliotis shell and silver rings are likewise worn on dance occasions, although that through the lobe may be of every day use. I saw no evidence of the

use of the labret among this people, and they assured me that this custom did not exist among them in early days, and that if a woman were found with the lip pierced, it was because she was of the coast people or related to them.

FIG. 9.—Quill embroidered ceremonial belt.

For personal decoration the face was daubed with red ochre or with charcoal, and vermilion procured from traders was used later for the same purpose. No figures, totemic or otherwise, were known. To protect the skin from bites of insects and from the reflection of the sunlight on the snow, to prevent sun blindness from the glare, and t indicate grief or anger the face is smeared with a thin coating of suet from the goat, sheep, or caribou, and then blackened by puffing over it the finely charred powder of a fungus growth of the hemlock. Rudely improvised snow goggles of birch bark, with narrow slits to admit the light, are also used while travelling over the snow in bright sunshine.

The men formerly wore the hair cut straight around, hanging to or almost to the shoulders, and banged across the forehead. For dances and other ceremonies it was covered with swansdown. The hair of the women was plaited in one braid that hung down the back. Those of the higher class wore, fastened around this braid, near the head and hanging down over it, a strip of hide covered with dentalium in parallel rows, each row separated from the other by lines of colored beads (Pl. VIII,

D). Attached to this pendant there was sometimes a copper, iron, or silver ornament of peculiar shape.

Tattooing was common in the past, but I found no good examples of this form of personal ornamentation, only insignificant geometric figures on the backs of the hands. Formerly it was shown in lines and dots on the forearm, the ankles, the chin, and the face. It was accomplished by means of a fine needle and a thread of sinew rubbed in powdered charcoal.

The drum is so intimately associated with the dress, its

FIG. 10.—Drum consisting of a piece of goat skin stretched on a wooden frame and decorated with red ochre.

use being for dance occasions only, that it may not be amiss to mention it here (Fig. 10). It is made of the tanned hide of the

mountain goat, stretched, when wet, over a circular wooden frame, and secured on the under side by cutting the skin into four strips, tapering from the circumference to the centre, where they are knotted, and so serve as a handle. At the present time tacks are often used around the lower edge of the frame to bring all parts taut. The head is often painted in totemic design. The drums are much smaller than those used by the Tlingit and some of them are very small. The instrument may be beaten with the fist, but generally an improvised drumstick is employed. No regular drumstick was seen.

Etched or carved implements and utensils were further ornamented with red ochre.

Porcupine quills were dyed black by boiling in water with a powdered black stone. Red was likewise obtained from a red mineral powder. Articles were dyed yellow by boiling tree moss and steeping the objects in the decoction and boiling. Green was obtained from decayed wood.

The primitive ornamentation of clothing was in colored quill embroidery, but with the acquisition of trade beads this was abandoned. The oldest beadwork was made by stringing the beads on sinew; the whole piece of work was then attached to the body material. With the introduction of steel needles the cloth ground was embroidered and then sewed on the skin.

HOUSEHOLD IMPLEMENTS AND UTENSILS

As previously stated, in household utensils the Tahltan were particularly poor, judging from their own accounts, and indeed little has survived their transformation, for to-day they depend entirely on what they obtain from trading stores. The aboriginal water vessels and cooking utensils were of birch bark similar to those found among the neighboring Déné people, and in their trade with the Tlingit they obtained wooden food dishes, boxes, and woven spruce root baskets which were used for like purposes. I failed to find any evidence of the bark vessel among

them, although I saw some boxes and baskets from the coast on which they set great value, and also a single dish made from mountain sheep horn used to hold oil. Spoons of the horn of the mountain sheep, mountain goat, and caribou, and also of wood, were rudely fashioned and were ornamented in geometric figures filled in with red ochre or with brass tacks. Some artistically carved goat horn spoons inlaid with haliotis shell, and several painted wooden spoons in possession of the chief, had been procured from the coast. The soapberry spoon was of wood or of caribou horn and was without ornamentation. The only visible stone implements used in the preparation of food were a couple of woman's hand hammers, or mashers which were clearly procured in trade from the coast. Trinket boxes were made by scraping very thin a section of caribou horn, which was softened in boiling water, then bent around a circular bottom of wood, and the end overlapped and sewed. The cover was similarly made.

Root diggers are simply sharpened sticks. Snow shovels are used for making paths from the house or camp. Hooks of horn of or wood, secured to the house walls or to camp poles, serve for hanging hunting implements.

Fire was formerly produced by means of a drill stick manipulated between the palms pressed against a bed-piece of wood, but it is said that a bow drill was used by the women as more easy of manipulation. In later years flint and steel and light tree-punk were employed.

Bags and Netting

Bags of skin and net, varying in size and shape for the sexes and to meet the requirements for which they are intended form an all important feature in the economic life of the Tahltan. These people are indifferent workers in wood, and make no attempt to fashion boxes and chests; neither are they basket weavers. The bag takes the place of such articles, and its lightness and compactness make it indispensable to a travelling people whose only means of transportation is the pack. The

dry climate in which they live permits its use in all seasons. All the varieties of bags are made by the woman.

The largest size is that used as a trunk for the storage of clothing (Pl. IX, C). It is of a single piece of tanned caribou skin, sewed up the sides, the extension of the back piece forming a flap that can be buttoned or tied down over the opening. Not being designed for transportation, it is not fitted with carrying loops. This bag is fringed around the sides and bottom, and ornamented with colored cloth and beadwork within the border and over the flap. It is wholly the property of the woman, and much taste is displayed in its ornamentation.

Second in size, but first in importance, is the pack bag, which differs according to the sex for which it is designed (Pl. VII, B). As has been seen, the Tahltan are trail men and land travellers. Their rivers are swift and treacherous, flowing through rock cañons, and are dangerous or impossible to navigate, hence they have little knowledge of the water, and seldom trust themselves upon it except to cross a lake or a stream on rude, improvised rafts. When travelling they pack their belongings on their backs. Formerly, in winter, they used a bag-like sledge of skin, but this has been superseded by the conventional wooden sledge drawn by large dogs.

The woman's bag is of tanned caribou skin, about two feet long by eighteen inches deep, made in one piece. The sides are sewn together, leaving a double border of about three inches outside the seam, which is cut in fringe; a corresponding fringe is sewn along the bottom, and the outside is ornamented with a band of colored cloth, edged with beads or bead embroidery extending around the sides. This form of ornamentation has superseded the more primitive embroidery in porcupine quills. A line of skin is inserted and half-hitched at short intervals around the mouth. Through this a lacing is passed to secure the contents; and at each end is sewn a stout loop to which the pack straps are made fast.

A bag similar in character, but larger and heavier, was

formerly carried by the men, but it is seldom seen to-day. The back was of tanned caribou skin, the front of strips of the leg skin of the moose or caribou with the hair remaining and showing on the outside. It was generally plain, but sometimes was ornamented with fringe.

The bag used by the man is of babiche, netted to a band of caribou skin, from an inch to three inches wide, sometimes embroidered in porcupine quill or beads, and extending around the mouth (Pl. IX, D). It is about two feet long and fourteen inches deep, with quarter-inch to half-inch meshes. The band around the mouth is slit at short intervals, and through these slits the double tie string, made fast in the middle, is laced, to secure the contents in carriage. Two stout loops are sewn to the band at each corner to receive the pack straps. This bag serves for carrying food for a day's travel, or for transporting game, snares, utensils, and other belongings of the man.

Another pack bag of net is used for carrying fresh fish. It is made of a coarse, two-strand, twisted cord of the wool of the mountain goat (Pl. IX, E). The meshes are from three quarters of an inch to an inch, and the cord is an eighth of an inch in diameter. The network is half-hitched around a four-strand plaited rope at the mouth, and is held secure by a single line wound around each half-hitch and the rope. The rope is knotted into loops at each end, and continues beyond one end for three feet or more in two lines that serve as breast cords for packing. The advantage of using the goat's wool cord in these bags for carrying fresh fish is that

FIG. 11.—Carrying strap.

it remains soft and pliable with the constant wetting and the slime of the fish, which would soon ruin a bag of skin or babiche. This bag is seldom seen to-day; I saw but one woman who still used it.

In using the pack bag, two carrying straps are employed, the breast cord and the headband. The former is always used, but the latter is brought into service only on long journeys and when the weight of the load is great. The breast cord is of four-strand plaited strips of well tanned caribou hide from fifteen to twenty-five feet long; it is generally doubled and secured to a leg bone of the marten, mink, or other small animal. In use it is secured near the end to the loop of the pack bag, carried over the shoulders and chest, run through the other loop, brought back again and carried around the bone, and secured to its own part; or, if the bone is wanting, the two ends are tied together in front. The advantage of the bone attachment is in the easy adjustment of the cord by using the bone as a pulley, and the readiness with which the pack can be slipped. Generally, in packing, a piece of old blanket or clothing is thrown over the shoulders and brought across the chest to relieve the pressure of the cord. The headband (Fig. 11), which is used when heavy burdens are borne, or on long journeys, consists of a strip of the leg-skin of the moose or caribou, slightly tanned and with the hair remaining, about two feet long by four to five and one-half inches in breadth. It is lengthened about six inches at each end by the addition of a heavy, rounded piece of hard, tanned leather, to which is sewn a double tie string of caribou hide from a foot to eighteen inches in length. Just within the junction of the band and the leather ends a bone stretcher is seized to keep the band flattened out, thus distributing the weight over a greater surface of the head. This band passes above the forehead. It is the first to be adjusted, then the tie strings are made fast to the loops of the pack bag. With few exceptions the stretching bones are ornamentally etched or cut in geometric figures, which are filled in with red ochre or vermilion (Fig. 12).

The skin sledge, above alluded to, is a capacious oblong pack bag that is drawn over the snow in winter, and is aboriginal in both design and construction. It consists of strips of the

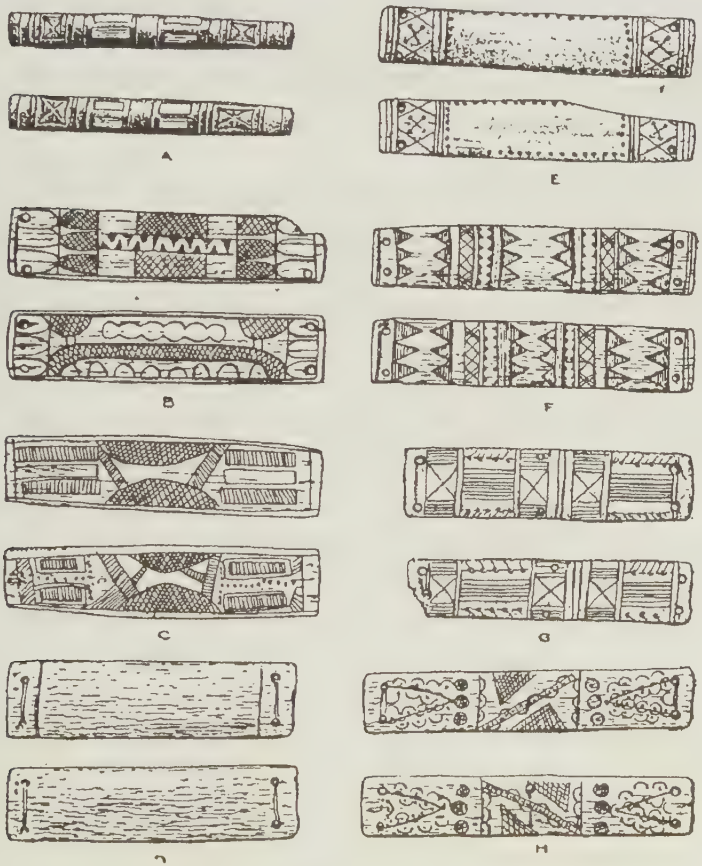


FIG 12.—Bone attachments for carrying straps

leg skin of moose or caribou, untanned, and sewed together in such manner that the hair lies lengthwise. The sewn strips are drawn together at the fore end, and along the border are cut slits through which a cross-lashing is carried when the bag is packed, so that the sides are brought well over the contents. Two heavy loops of hide are sewed near the head, one on each

side, to which the span is made fast, and to this the hauling line is secured. This sledge is drawn by hand, and when moving in the direction of the hair it offers but little resistance. If, when going down steep inclines, over a frozen surface, the sledge acquires too great momentum, by a dexterous turn of the drag rope it can be quickly slued and its progress checked through the resistance of the short, stiff hairs against the ground. Wooden sleds of the conventional type drawn by dogs have superseded this older type.

To-day the Tahltan possess many dogs of all breeds and sizes, a mongrel lot, but very useful for packing and for hauling sledges. Prior to the Cassiar gold excitement they had only very small fox-like dogs, of a breed I have never seen elsewhere, intelligent, keen of scent, and excellent hunters, but too tiny to be of any service in transportation. Dog packing, therefore, is a borrowed industry, and consequently the pack saddle is not original with the Tahltan. The saddle is sometimes of skin, but more often of canvas, and is provided with a pocket on each side. The pack line passes over the bags, then comes beneath and around outside, around the dog in the rear of the pack, and about the neck. A dog carries from twenty-five to fifty pounds, according to its size and strength.

Every adult is provided with a work or repair bag of conventional form but differing according to the sex of the owner, in which the implements and other articles of every day use are kept. Whether in the house or in the camp this bag is always at hand, and in travel it is placed at the top of the pack, convenient of access. The man's bag of tanned caribou skin is rectangular in form, with an average length of fourteen inches and a depth of eight inches. It is generally of two pieces, sewn together along the sides and bottom, leaving outside a margin of an inch or more which is fringed for ornamentation. Within the outside seam a strip of colored cloth is attached all the way around, and is edged with beads. Around the opening

a cording of hide extends, or narrow slits are cut, through which a tie string serves as a lacing to protect the contents (Pl. X).

Certain tools and accessories are found in every sack, the most important being the following.

(1) The knife is of two varieties: one with a straight, the other with a curved steel blade, fitted and secured by means of a hide seizing to a handle of wood, bone, or horn. Both of these have their uses in the manufacture of household, hunting, and fishing implements.

(2) The snowshoe chisel, of steel, has a thick blade, but a narrow cutting edge, and is used principally for perforating the frame of the snowshoe to receive the lacing. It is set in and lashed with hide to a short, thick handle of wood or of bone, larger at the head, and cut out so that considerable pressure may be brought to bear upon it without danger of slipping. This form of blade and handle is universal among the interior tribes as far as the Alsech valley, and is also found among the Chilkat.

(3) The awl, consisting of a steel point inserted in a handle of horn or of wood, serves a variety of purposes in addition to its original use as a sewing instrument. The point is sometimes protected by a wooden case. Before the introduction of iron the awl was a sharpened bone.

(4) A piece of fine-grained sandstone of convenient size and shape to sharpen the steel tools.

(5) A beaver jawbone with the teeth intact, or a bear's incisor, across which the knife blade is drawn after it has been ground on the stone to give it a keen edge.

(6) A strip of caribou sinew for thread or seizing.

(7) A lancet for surgical purposes, consisting of a steel blade inserted in a wooden handle, or wrapped with bark, root, or sinew, and extending well down the blade so that it can penetrate only so far in the flesh. The Tahltan puncture swellings and inflammation to produce irritation and to bleed the parts, and dress the wounds with bird's down. This, so far as I could learn, is the only surgical operation they perform. When not in

use, the lancet is wrapped in a small piece of skin to protect the blade. The same practice and a similar instrument are common among the Tlingit and may have been borrowed from them.

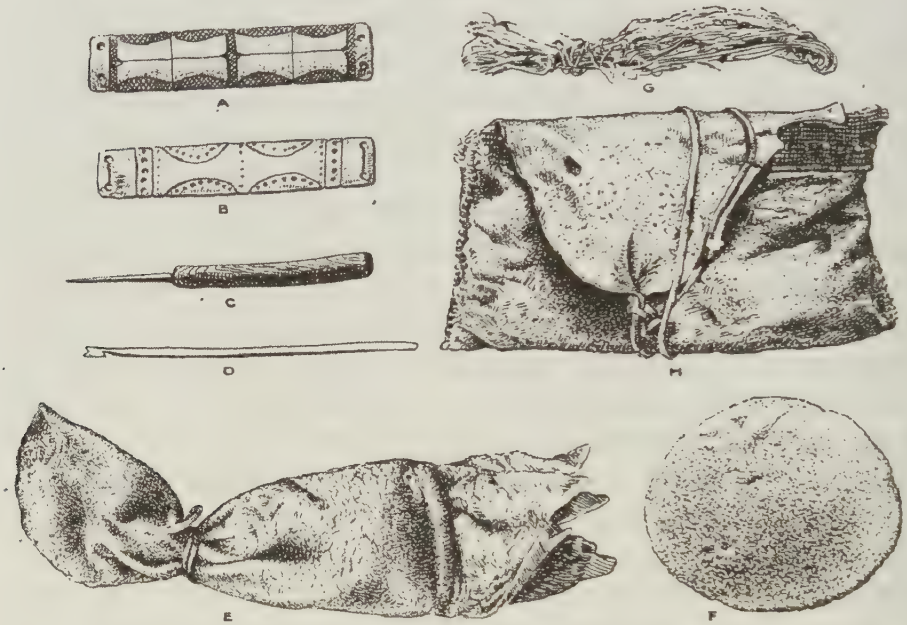


FIG. 13.—Woman's workbag with contents. *A* and *B*: bone attachments for carrying strap *C*: sewing awl. *D*: netting needle for netting mocassins. *E*: paint bag. *F*: stone scraper for dressing skins. *G*: sinew thread. *H*: workbag.

(8) A long, narrow, skin bag containing pulverized red ochre or vermilion for facial decoration, as well as for filling the incisions and etched figures on bone implements, and for coloring skin clothing.

Besides the articles enumerated above, there are numerous spare articles for repairing, together with odds and ends more individual in character, that may be found in one or another bag, as bone gambling toggles, pack strap stretchers, bone skinning knife, medicinal roots, snowshoe friction brakes of goat horn, gaff hooks, fishhooks, beaver spears, and sometimes such old pieces as have been used in the past and have possibly

been found and are kept for no particular reason, as cutting chips of obsidian, and arrow and bow heads.

The woman's workbag is smaller than that of the man, more square in shape, and made with a long flap beyond the pocket (Pl. XI). When not in use it is rolled up and secured with a single tie string wrapped around. This bag is generally ornamented with a strip of colored cloth around the border, beaded but never fringed (Figs. 13, 14, 15). It usually contains the following articles.

(1) A knife, with a straight blade similar to that of the man's knife but very much smaller. This is used in cutting babiche, and skins for clothing, and in netting snowshoes, bags, and lines. In early days obsidian splinters served as knives for such purposes.

(2) An awl, consisting of an iron point set in a handle of horn, bone, or wood. It serves the purpose of a needle when sinew thread is used in making skin clothing, and is the most personal article in the woman's life; indeed a favorite awl is seldom parted with. It is made by the man, and, inartistic as these people are, this particular implement exhibits in both the selection of the material and its construction a desire to produce something more ornate than the ordinary working tool.

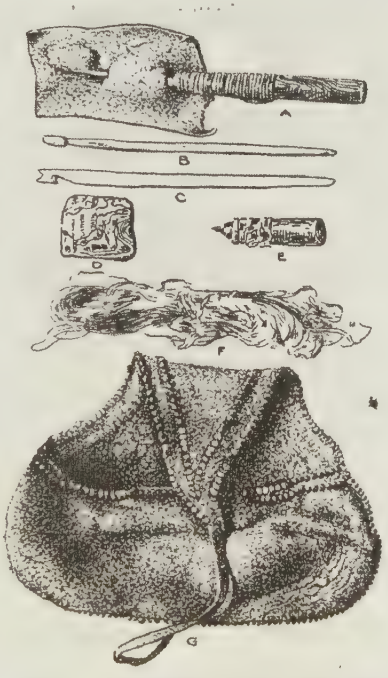


FIG. 14.—Woman's workbag with contents. *A*: sewing awl. *B* and *C*: netting needles. *D*: earring of abalone shell. *E*: lancet. *F*: sinew thread. *G*: workbag.

(3) Caribou sinew for thread, made by separating the tendonous tissue with the finger nail and stripping off very fine fibres. These are rolled on the leg, and two of them may be rolled together to produce longer thread. In connection with the awl

and the sinew thread may here be mentioned the thread holders, which, though not kept in the bag, on account of their size, form a part of the sewing outfit. Only three of these were found among the Tahltan, two of wood and one of bone, all ornamentally shaped and incised. They are no longer used. They are in the form of a small stake sharpened at the lower end. Near the head they are cut halfway through, and then split down one-third the length. When in use the sharpened end was stuck in the ground, within easy reach of the sewer. The threads were middled, passed through the horizontal opening, and arranged in the vertical slit one above the other with the shorter projecting end toward the operator, who, as she needed a new thread, drew out the uppermost one.

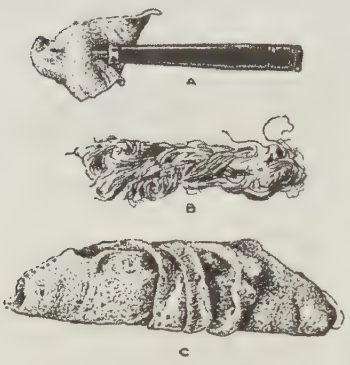


FIG. 15.—Woman's workbag and contents. *A*: sewing awl. *B*: sinew thread. *C*: workbag rolled up and fastened with attached thong.

(4) A small whetstone and a beaver tooth or a bear tooth for sharpening the knife and the awl may often be found in the woman's workbag.

(5) A net needle of bone, used in netting the babiche filling of snowshoes.

(6) A hand skin dresser of stone, and sometimes a short one of bone.

(7) Such articles as fungus for blackening the face, a bag of red ochre for personal adornment, a lancet, and such odds and ends as may have been found or have been dropped into the bag for safe keeping.

A small bag of tanned moose or caribou skin, carried by the man, suspended by a strap over the shoulders, used originally as a fire sack, later to hold ammunition for the muzzle loader, has, with the introduction of the breech loader, degenerated into a ceremonial appendage, and as such bids fair to survive every other

type of bag (Pl. IX, A). In every household these were found in great abundance, as many as ten or twelve in the possession of an individual. Indeed these bags from their number and ornamentation seem to mark the measure of the wife's affection for her husband, for in no other product of the Tahltan (save the knife case, which forms a companion piece) is so fully expressed a sense of the æsthetic both in elegance of design and in harmony of color, which is in marked contrast with the general inartistic work of this people. While a few square and oblong bags are met with, the characteristic form is rounded at the bottom. The pocket is in depth about two-thirds of that of the bag; to the back piece, which is the longer, a broad neckband is attached. The primitive embroidery was in colored porcupine quill, and dentalium shells were often added; but of late years red and blue cloth, and trade beads, have formed their chief media of decoration.

Another type of bag, wholly ornamental, in which the bottom is divided into strips, elaborately beaded, is worn on dance occasions; but it is not confined to the Tahltan, as it is found as far north as the Yukon basin and is equally popular among the Tlingit of the coast.

Improvised bags consisting of the whole skins of smaller animals, as the marmot, the rabbit, the young of the mountain goat, and the beaver, with the fur intact, are used for storing small articles of various kinds.

Snowshoes

Snowshoes form an indispensable adjunct to the life of this entire region, and its native inhabitants are very expert in their manufacture. The men furnish the frame complete, and the women provide and net the filling. The frame is fashioned of willow, spruce, or birch. The willow is the lightest wood, but is not very durable; the spruce is somewhat heavy, and to a degree brittle; the birch is best in dry snow, but absorbs moisture readily, when it becomes heavy.

The frames are made in three distinct shapes, each depending on the service for which the shoe is to be used, and on the fancy of the individual. For travel over lakes, rivers, and open country the raised oval toe is preferred; for hunting in the small wood and over brush lands the raised pointed toe is best (known as the Kaska type after the people from whom it was borrowed). Children use the flat rounded toe which is of simpler construction. The toe of the shoe is raised to keep it from digging in the snow. The frame of all the types is of two equal pieces, spliced and wound at the toe, and brought together and secured at the heel. The bending of the toe to produce the upward and rounding curve is done gradually by successive wetting, steaming over the fire, and lashing. The oval flattened cross-pieces, of which there are three in the rounded toe form and two in that with the pointed toe, are let into horizontal mortises in the frame; and the perforation for the selvage thong on which the netting is woven is made with the special awl described among the implements to be found in the repair bag of every man. When finished the frame is turned over to the woman to be netted.

The filling of the front and rear spaces on the hexagonal netting is of fine babiche of caribou skin, but it is said that the skin of the mountain sheep is sometimes substituted. It is passed around the cross-bars and through the loops of the selvage thong, which is woven in two different ways: (1) by looping through the perforation and around a small peg on the outside, and drawing the peg and loop into the V-shaped hole and countersink; or (2) the thong is doubled around each alternate pair of perforations and countersunk on the outside of the frame in horizontal grooves, giving a continuous series of loops along the inside. In the wake of the permanent toe wrapping, the thong passes inside and over alternate pairs of the seizings.

The netting of the central foot space of moose or caribou rawhide, in a coarse hexagonal weave, passes over both cross-

bars and frame. The rest for the ball of the foot is simply a double cross-line. Beaver skin was sometimes used as an extra strong foot filling in the shoes of the leader who broke the trail in heavy snow.

For ornamental purposes tufts of red and blue worsted are gathered into the knots or loops of the netting thong around the outside of the front and rear spaces. The foot loops are of coarse hide. The usual proportion of the adult's shoe is in length about four and one-half times the maximum breadth.

A brake attachment to the snowshoe, to prevent slipping on hard or crusted snow, particularly when travelling over a hilly country, consists of the tip of a horn of the mountain goat, which, lashed to the frame and projecting beneath the margin, inclining inward and backward, prevents slipping. Such a brake is secured to each side of the frame, abreast the main front crossbar, and the hide seizing passes around the frame and over the notched head of the horn to resist the upward pressure from crusted snow. This attachment is employed by the people of the interior, back of the Chilkat mountains. It has been adopted by the Chilkat, and is in use also by the Nishka on the upper waters of Nass river.

The snowshoe staff, an accompaniment of the shoe often necessary when the travel is over soft and deep snow, consists of a staff of the thickness of a walking stick, and about five feet long, the lower end terminating in a dull point. A few inches above the point is cut a shallow groove, around which is lashed a small, circular, netted shoe about six inches in diameter. The frame of this shoe consists of a flat section of birch or of willow, cut green, bent round and seized to its own part. The netting is of coarse babiche made from caribou skin and woven over a thong which is run through the perforations of the frame.

FOOD

The Tahltan, being hunters, are essentially meat eaters, and while they enjoy fresh fish in the summer season, and cure a certain amount, they care little for the dried product as a winter diet, using it more for dog food, when other sources of supply fail.

They cook all fresh meat and fish, and while to-day they are supplied with kettles and pans, in primitive times they had very few utensils, so that fresh food was prepared in the simplest manner by roasting on a spit before the open fire. In boiling food they used watertight vessels of birch bark, rude wooden dugouts, and boxes and baskets, which latter were procured in trade from the coast people. The operation of cooking was accomplished by means of heated stones dropped into the water.

The nomadic life of the Tahltan, which necessitates the carrying of all burdens on the back compels them to dispense with everything superfluous, hence the lack of utensils.

Caribou and moose meat constitute the main food supply, although the Tahltan say that before they were supplied with firearms they depended largely on the smaller animals which were more easily taken, particularly the ground hog, which they snared in great numbers in the fall and dried for winter use. The fat of the marmot was removed and packed away in bags made of the stomach of the animal, or of the whole skin, which was removed by drawing back over the carcass through an incision made at the mouth. The fat is sometimes melted, poured into the bladder and the latter tied at the opening. Rabbits being abundant, and easily snared, become a very important adjunct when naught else can be obtained. Bears of the black, grizzly, and brown species, the mountain sheep and mountain goat, beaver, porcupine, grouse, ptarmigan, and all migratory water fowl likewise serve as food. The soapberry is dried in the form of cakes for winter use. Cer-

tain roots, as well as the inner bark of the black pine, are also eaten.

Whitefish are procured from Dease lake, but in such a limited quantity that, although greatly esteemed, they are hardly worthy of mention.

It is probable that in early days fish, both dried and frozen, was a much more important item of food than it is to-day, when, with improved arms, the Tahltan can procure all the game they require, not to mention the products of civilization which are becoming necessary to their changed condition.

The cultivation of potatoes has met with little success on account of the lack of rain and the extreme dryness of the soil.

SMOKING AND ITS SUBSTITUTES

Tobacco was unknown to the Tahltan and their neighbors until the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it was introduced from the coast by the Tlingit who had procured it in trade from visiting European vessels. Prior to that time smoking was not practised by either people. A substitute for tobacco, likewise brought from the coast, consisted of a mixture of powdered burnt clam shell, charred tree bark and a species of nicotine plant dried; these were reduced to the form of a paste and rolled into little pellets the size of a pea. One of the pellets was placed between the lower lip and the gum and sucked, necessitating constant expectoration. The nicotine plant, which was cultivated among the Tlingit, is said to have been brought up the Stikine river and planted in small garden patches at the old village of Tutchararone, near the mouth of the Tahltan river.

Of pipes two varieties are found, the one designed for ordinary use, and the other for ceremonial occasions (Pls. XV–XVII). The former, although the plainer, and in shape evidently copied from the pipe of commerce, is the more characteristic. When

made of stone it is rather small and of a red homogeneous volcanic rock found in pockets in the cliffs overlooking the Stikine near the Tahltan. I have seen no stone pipes that were ornamentally carved, but on account of the material of which they are made they are highly prized. The everyday pipe of wood is of very different shape, having an extended main stem in one piece with the bowl. It often has a reclining grotesque figure resting on top of the stem near the bowl, but in most cases this form of pipe is without ornamentation. The bowl of every wooden pipe is lined with metal, often a section of musket barrel extending slightly above the bowl. The stem or mouthpiece is of any suitable wood, rudely cut and often consisting of the section of a branch of pith wood.

The feast pipes, used at the death feast and on family ceremonial occasions, are always carved, and in almost every instance represent the family crest. They are inlaid with haliotis shell and often ornamented with copper and brass, and daubed with red ochre. These pipes are the most ornamental specimens of handiwork of the Tahltan men, but they are few in number, and, although cruder both in conception and in workmanship, they exhibit a striking similarity to the feast pipes of the Tlingit.

There is no indication that the Tahltan ever possessed any intoxicant. The introduction of liquor by both the whites and the coast natives has proved a great curse to them, and is largely accountable for their bodily ills and decrease in numbers.

HUNTING AND HUNTING IMPLEMENTS

From environment and through necessity the Tahltan have always been trappers and hunters. Food, clothing, implements, and household utensils were formerly made almost entirely from animal products. Before the acquisition of firearms they depended

more on the snare and the deadfall than on the bow and the spear. To-day they depend on the rifle to supply the larder and on the trap to furnish the valuable peltries of the smaller fur bearing animals.

In September the permanent villages are rapidly deserted, and by families and parties the people set out for the hunting grounds, where camps are established and shifted as occasion demands. Of late years it has become a custom with many to return about Christmas for a short season of meeting and feasting, then again to go out for the late winter hunting. But in more primitive times they claim to have followed the game until spring. Of course little can now be learned of the life of this people before the fur trade was established by Europeans in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Up to that period hunting was conducted solely for the purpose of providing food and clothing. There was no inducement to accumulate beyond their actual needs except for the limited trade with their neighbors. It seems very likely that with an abundance of salmon for winter consumption the Tahltan in former times were more sedentary than they are known to have been after the great demand for furs made itself felt, when the incentive to hunt was stimulated by the desire for European products.

The implements of the chase were few in number and simple in construction, consisting of bow and arrow, spear, and knife. As elsewhere the bow was discarded as soon as the musket made its appearance, while blades of iron superseded those of stone and bone. I failed to find a single bow or arrow of aboriginal make, although barbs and blades of stone are of common occurrence. The following descriptions are from the testimony of older people and from models made by them.

The oldest and best bow was made of balsam, although spruce and birch were also used. It was five feet or more in length, and was not backed or otherwise artificially strengthened except in its manufacture when it was heated and rubbed with

the castorium to toughen the wood. It was stout in body, rectangular in cross section, tapering slightly toward each end, and rather clumsy in its proportions owing to the fact that it was used also as a spear at close quarters for dispatching the wounded. An obsidian blade was attached to one end. This blade differed from the arrowhead only in its greater length and the proportionately narrow base and shallow notches. Horn and latterly iron blades were also used. The bowstring was of caribou sinew, which was twisted when wet until perfectly round; it was sometimes permanently attached to the bow by weaving it through a tiny hole in the arm beyond the notch, drawing it up to a knot in the end, and then half-hitching it around the notch.

The following sketch and description of another type of bow and its manner of construction was written by the first accredited missionary to the Tahltan, the Reverend Mr. Palgrove, and sent to me by Dr. Ingles of Telegraph creek (see cut p. 67).

1. Wooden bow.
2. Caribou horn.
3. Sinew, fastening caribou horn to bow.
4. Ends of bow wound around with split porcupine quills, securing ends of the thick moose skin, which is also attached to the bow by quills.
5. numerous porcupine quills used in the fashion of tintacks
6 Part of bow grasped by the hand, where consequently the skin is not tacked on, but glued on with spruce gum

Bows were first made without the moose skin covering (which covered only the convex outside of the bow), but one day an Indian's bow broke while he had it fully drawn, and the horn flew off, together with the broken wood, striking him just below the neck and piercing him to the backbone, so that he fell dead. After this tragedy the Tahltan always safeguarded their horn knives by having the bow covered with skin, so that if any part of the bow should break it could not fly off and do damage

The caribou horn was fixed to the top end of the bow, and when an animal which had been shot was overtaken, the hunter killed it by prodding it with the horn knife, holding his bow like a spear

The arrow shaft was of black pine; foreshafts were never

used. The feathering was double, of hawk or owl feathers laid flat on opposite sides of the shaft and secured at each end with a wrapping of sinew. It is said that points of bone, horn, and ivory were used, but the only ones found were of obsidian, and these were dug from old village sites or found in the vicinity of springs that had been frequented by animals. The obsidian was obtained from the country between upper Stikine and Iskoot rivers, where it abounds The point was fitted into the split shaft head, secured with a seizing of sinew, and the whole smoothed over with a dressing of spruce gum applied when semi-liquified by heating. For big game, especially caribou, the barb was fitted but not seized to the shaft, so that when it penetrated the animal it detached itself and worked its way into the flesh, finally causing death. For grouse, ptarmigan, water fowl, rabbits and other small game the wooden shaft was expanded to a rounded head which served its purpose well.

The quiver was of caribou skin, almost cylindrical in form, ornamentally fringed, and painted in lines or smeared with red ochre or vermilion. It was carried over the back.

The bow was held vertically in the left hand, the thumb extended along the inner side and the index finger over the arrow, which was steadied in place between the index and middle fingers. The notch of the arrow was grasped with the straightened thumb and the bent forefinger, assisted by the middle finger to draw the string back.

The spear, used both as an implement of the chase and in warfare, consisted of an obsidian blade much like the bow point, but of greater length, carefully fitted in a corresponding cleft in the end of a stout wooden handle about six feet long, and se-

curely lashed with hide. Iron blades were substituted as soon as this metal was introduced by the whites. A type of the latter, procured in trade from the fur companies, was very broad, double edged, with two notches at the base around which the lashing passed holding it firmly in place. Cases for protecting the blades were of wood, split in halves, hollowed out to conform to the shape of the blade, and grooved horizontally outside for the purpose of accommodating the seizing of hide.

The primitive knife used equally for hunting and in war was of obsidian, differing little from the spear blade. It was hafted in a short wooden handle split into halves and wrapped with sinew or hide, and was carried suspended around the neck or attached to the belt in a wooden case similar to the spear case. The obsidian knife was superseded by the iron blade which was fitted in a handle of horn, bone, or wood. The iron hunting knife was much shorter and ruder in workmanship than the war knife, and was carried in a case of wood or skin.

The flintlock musket of the Hudson's Bay Company was procured by the Tahltan from the coast people, in exchange for furs, early in the nineteenth century. The percussion cap musket was introduced later, but this in turn gave place to the rifle, and to-day no people have more approved arms than the Tahltan.

The accompaniment of the muzzle loader was the powder

Fig. 16.—Powder flask.

horn or a bag (Fig. 16) made of intestine tied about a hollow bone nozzle, a shot pouch of similar shape, and an open mouthed

oblong bag for bullets, all of which, with shredded bark for wadding, were carried hanging under the left arm, in a small skin pouch generally ornamented in beadwork, still retained as an adjunct of the ceremonial dress. The powder charger, a hollow section of mountain goat or caribou horn or bone, was attached to the string of the powder horn or it served as the stopper of the shot pouch. Percussion caps were carried in small bone tubes, but for convenience circular or oblong pieces of leather were often cut on one edge to take the caps, and then were hung to the powder horn or to the trigger guard. A small wire pick for cleaning the vent or nipple was similarly carried. With the introduction of breech loaders, cartridge belts came into use.

Each animal had its peculiar economic value in the life of the people. The skins of all were utilized, and the flesh of all was eaten save that of the wolf, fox, wolverene, otter, fisher, marten, mink, muskrat, and ermine, and even these were used as food when necessity required. But the caribou has always had first place in the economic life of the Tahltan. Its flesh, together with that of the moose and the mountain sheep, was the most highly esteemed. Its skin was the most valued for clothing and for sleeping mats, and it furnished sinew for thread, nets, bowstrings, and seizings. From the horns and bones, skin dressing implements, knives, spoons, hooks, awls, and other tools as well as ornaments were fashioned. Indeed the caribou was to the Tahltan what the buffalo was to the tribes of the plains and the seal to the Eskimo. It is still abundant, and attracts sportsmen from many parts of the world. Its habitat is the uplands to the north and east of Dease lake, where moss is most plentiful.

The great value of the caribou made its hunting a matter of the first importance, and several different methods were employed for its capture. The bow and arrow were not very effectual in the open country, hence driving and snaring were resorted to in the late fall and winter when the caribou travelled in herds.

Frozen lakes, and particularly Dease lake, which is long and narrow, were obstructed at favorite points of crossing with brush barriers connected with wide mouthed corrals on each shore. These obstructions were built of stakes driven in the ground, interlaced with branches, and terminating in long narrow passages into which the frightened animals crowded, with no room to turn, thus falling easy prey to the thrusts of the spear and the knife in the hands of the hunters concealed on each side. Caribou are fond of the open, and the wall of brush on the ice was sufficient to turn them when pursued by shouting men and barking dogs.

A similar form of game barrier consisted of fences of stakes and boughs built across low divides or well travelled trails, with frequent narrow openings in which simple noose snares of twisted rawhide were set and which caught the branching antlers as the animals attempted to pass. When a herd was located nearby, it was partly surrounded and driven toward the ambuscade, behind which the hunters with bows and spears were concealed. Many caribou were killed by this means.

When snow covered the ground to a depth of two feet or more caribou were hunted systematically. The natives, having found a herd of the animals, made arrangements to drive them to some point at a distance, generally a valley or a pocket, where the snow was of sufficient depth to impede their movements, and where the swiftest runners secreted themselves Others were stationed on each side. The old men and the boys with the dogs served as drivers, and with their cries and the beating of drums started the herd and kept it moving. When travelling in the snow the caribou follow in line, the leader breaking the trail and when the leader tires he steps aside, gives place to the next in succession, and falls in at the rear. When the animals reached the deeper snow the concealed hunters rose on all sides, and the frightened animals broke into confusion and were easily run down and speared by the swift-footed runners on snowshoes.

With the uniform cold of winter, meat kept indefinitely. The portion not needed for immediate use was cut in thin strips, notched, and sundried or smoked for future consumption, and particularly for use while travelling. In early days the dressed caribou skin was the most valuable article of exchange with the coast people.

The primitive methods of hunting were abandoned on the acquisition of the rifle.

The history of the occurrence of the moose in this section can not well be accounted for. It is believed to have been a habitant of all this region in early days, but for some unexplained reason the animal entirely disappeared early in 1800, to make its appearance again in 1877, when several were killed in the Dease country. Since then they have steadily increased in numbers, and have extended their range along the Stikine to below Telegraph creek. They are most abundant in the willow country toward Teslin, along the headwaters of the Tuya, and the tributaries of the Taku The belief prevails among the natives that the return of the moose was due to the coming of white men, as this occurred soon after the Cassiar gold excitement. Its flesh is esteemed equally with that of the caribou. It is believed to exceed the Cook's Inlet moose in size, although the spread of its horns is not so great.

The mountain sheep, the most graceful of the species, is still found in abundance on the mountains across from Telegraph creek, along the upper reaches of the Iskoot, and about the Narlin, Sheslay, and Teslin. From its inaccessibility and wariness it could never have proved a great source of supply with such primitive arms as the Tahltan possessed. Its flesh is the most delicate of all the animals of the continent. Its skin makes the most elastic of sleeping mats, and the horns after being softened by boiling, are cut, shaped, and pressed into dishes, spoons, knife handles, and tools, and have always been greatly in demand by the coast tribes, as the sheep does not approach salt water except at Cook Inlet, Alaska. The

mountain sheep was hunted formerly with bow and arrow, as it is to-day with the rifle, by stalking. In spring and summer it is often found about the streams. The writer remembers a sheep being shot just above the river bank at the junction of the Tahltan with the Stikine in the latter part of June, 1906.

The mountain goat is another habitant of the mountains; it is found everywhere in this region and is common also on the coast. It is hunted in the early fall, when it has taken on an abundance of leaf fat between the skin and the flesh, which is removed in mass, melted and run into cakes. The skins serve as mats and rugs, and the wool is rolled and twisted into cord that is netted into carrying bags. It has been claimed that the Tahltan formerly wore blankets of mountain goat wool, but I could not corroborate this by the testimony of any living member of the tribe, and there is no evidence of such use in any surviving fabric. Formerly the horns, boiled in water until softened, were cut, shaped, and modeled into spoons; they were used also for snowshoe breaks, for knife, awl, and other tool handles, for powder chargers, and the like. Goats were hunted in the same manner as were the sheep.

The black bear and the grizzly are both abundant throughout the mountainous districts. They are hunted both for the flesh and the pelt; the claws are worn as headdresses and as necklaces, and the teeth are used as knife sharpeners and worn as charms. Bears are speared or shot in their hibernating holes, which are scented by the dogs, and during the salmon season they are killed about the streams. But deadfalls and snares are more effectual. The former are constructed of heavy tree trunks weighted with others and baited with fish or meat; the latter are set in the trails and attached to a tossing pole, as shown in the illustrations.

The clothing, implements, utensils, and ornaments of every primitive hunting or fishing people, by reason of their constant and intimate contact with mammals or fish, are distinguished by an unmistakable odor. For instance, the coast people,

together with their houses and all they possess, are impregnated with the smoke of curing fish; everything pertaining to the life of the Esquimo is redolent of seal, walrus, and whale oil, while everything associated with the Tahltan gives out the pungent odor of the castoreum.

The beaver was formerly very abundant along the lower Stikine, in the country of sluggish streams and about the smaller lakes; but with the advent of European trading vessels and the establishment of posts by the Husdon's Bay Company along the northwest coast, the demand for beaver fur so increased that it was pursued unremittingly until the extinction of the animal seemed imminent. Besides the marketable value of the fur and the delicacy of the flesh, the castoreum was used for baiting traps, as it seemed to attract all animals equally. It was carried by the hunter in a horn, bone, or wooden box (Fig. 17), toggled to the belt, and was smeared over the bait or diluted and scattered over the adjacent ground. The cylindrical box was more often of caribou horn, plugged with wood at the bottom, and fitted with a wooden stopper attached with a slack hide string to the toggle so that it was not subjected to strain as the box hung from the belt. I found one very remarkable specimen of a castoreum case, made of a section of bamboo that must have been procured from the coast early in trade. Drifts of cocoanut, bamboo, and other Oriental woods are not infre-

FIG. 17.—Castoreum boxes. *A*: made of horn. *B*: made of bamboo.

quently found on the seaward shores of the Queen Charlotte Islands, brought thither by the Japan current.

The beaver was hunted with arrow and spear, and trapped with the deadfall in the milder seasons, but was not pursued during the summer months. When the lakes were well frozen, netting was resorted to with great success. The beaver net is of babiche, about twelve feet in length, stretching to half of that in depth, with six-inch meshes. It is square at one end and pointed at the other. A draw string passes around through the outer meshes, which, when pulled, bring the net together at the apex.

The net is set through a hole in the ice across the accustomed path of the animal from his lodge. The pointed end with its bone attachment is made fast to a stake driven in the ground, and the draw string is attached to a bent sapling to which is hung a rattle consisting of three or four sections of caribou or moose hoof, which sounds upon the slightest disturbance of the net (Fig. 18). The hunter now breaks into the beaver's house, and

Fig. 18.—Rattles for beaver net made of animal hoofs.

the fleeing animal becomes entangled in the meshes of the net, causing the rattle to sound. The draw strings are quickly hauled in and the game dispatched with a short handled, iron barbed

spear. The primitive barb was made of caribou horn or of bone. Sometimes the net, rubbed with castoreum, is set in clear water in a narrow passageway frequented by the beaver, which is caught at night. The hunter, sleeping on the bank with the draw string attached to his wrist, is awakened by the pull of the struggling animal in the net. To-day steel traps have taken the place of all other devices, and water in which the castoreum has stood is sprinkled about to attract the animal.

The land otter is not so abundant in the Tahltan country

FIG. 19.—Deadfall for marten.

as on the coast, and it is regarded with much superstition by the people generally. Its spirit is considered to be the property of the shaman and in early days the animal was not molested;

but after the great demand for furs took possession of the whole country, this feeling was overcome. The otter is now shot, and also taken in deadfalls, but its flesh is never eaten.

The marten is very abundant throughout the lower woodland country and in the vicinity of water. It has always been esteemed for its rich, soft fur, which makes the most valuable blankets and robes, and is always marketable. It is taken in several varieties of deadfall baited with fish (Fig. 19). Its flesh is not eaten.

The mink and the weasel are trapped like the marten. More or less superstition attaches to both of these animals, and particularly to the latter, the skins of which are worn by the shaman in his incantations. The flesh of neither is considered edible.

In primitive days the marmot, next to the caribou, was possibly the most important animal found here, from an economic point of view. Its great abundance and the ease with which it was captured insured a supply of nutritious food for the winter. As soon as the salmon season was over, the people went to the mountains and hunted this animal until it hiber-

FIG. 20.—Deadfall for bear, fox, wolf, land otter, marmot, etc.

nated. It was taken with a snare set in front of its hole. The body was split and dried or smoked and packed away for the season of want. The skin was cleaned, dressed on the underside, and used for making blankets, robes, caps, and heavy winter

shoes. The blankets were an important medium of trade with the coast people.

Wolves are said to be more abundant to-day than in the past; they were formerly taken in deadfalls (Fig. 20) but now are little sought.

Foxes are the most valuable of the fur bearing animals of the country. The species that produces the black, silver, cross, and red, is very abundant, and the great value of the skins of the black and silver varieties makes their hunting very profitable. Foxes were formerly taken by the deadfall, but this device has been superseded by the steel trap.

The lynx is found wherever rabbits are plentiful, and has always been sought by the Tahltan. Its skin is very desirable for making winter robes, and its flesh is eaten. It is snared by means of the tossing pole set at the entrance of a corral of small sticks, at the lower end of which is placed a rabbit skin smeared with castoreum. Another form of snare is secured to a sapling trunk several feet long, with noose set in the rabbit trail, so that when the animal springs the snare the pole catches in the small wood, and in the struggle that ensues the animal is strangled. A peculiar tradition is current with all the interior people, and has even found its way to the island inhabitants of the coast, that in early days the lynx had relations with woman, consequently there are certain regulations regarding its treatment and the consumption of various parts of its body.

Rabbits are found everywhere, and can be had in winter and spring when other food supplies fail. They are still taken with the hide or sinew noose and the tossing pole, set in the runways as in the past. The flesh is eaten, and the skins are used for making shirts, robes, caps, and particularly for baby blankets.

The ground squirrel is snared and the skins made into blankets which are very light and durable. The flesh of the porcupine is highly esteemed; the animal can be had at any time, and is simply hunted with a dog and struck over the head with a stick.

Ptarmigan and grouse are snared, and are also shot with the blunt headed arrow.

As previously stated, before the introduction of firearms the capture of animals for food and clothing depended much more on trapping than on the efficiency of the arrow or the spear. The ingenuity of the Indian was taxed to the utmost to devise practical means to this end, inventing various forms of snares and traps. The former seem to have found more

FIG. 21*a*.—Snare for rabbits.

favor, as might be expected in a land covered with snow during a large part of the year, and particularly when the fish and berry supplies were cut off and when the furs were in prime condition.

The snare for the larger animals consists of a rope of

twisted rawhide fitted with an eye at one or at each end, and secured at one end to a stake or a tree trunk, or to the tossing pole in the form of a stout tree trunk nicely balanced. The noose in the other end opens out over the trail, or an opening in the fence, and slipping over the animal's head, strangles it in its efforts to escape. For smaller animals the snare is of hide, or of twisted sinew or tree fiber, fitted with a wooden toggle about a third of its length from the noose end. The standing part is permanently secured to a sapling, bent over, or to a section of tree trunk balanced with the weight at the lower

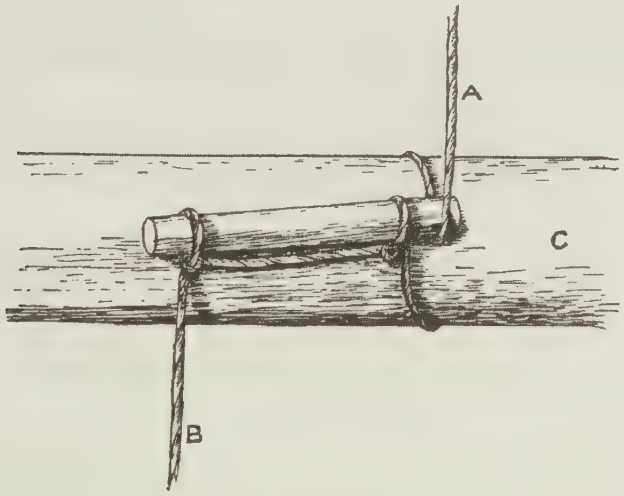


FIG. 21*b*.—Trigger for snare shown in figure 21*a*

end. By means of the toggle the strain of the sapling or tree-trunk is held until a slight disturbance of the noose releases the toggle when the sapling springs back into place or the trunk falls and the struggling animal is lifted and strangled (Fig. 21).

The second type of trap consists of a deadfall formed of a log or logs, weighted or not according to the size of the animal to be taken, and hung by means of a simple trigger held by a light rod which the animal springs by stepping upon or attempting to remove the bait rendered more attractive by smearing with castoreum.

SKIN-DRESSING

The tanning and dressing of hides and skins forms an industry in which the Tahltan women excel. It was their most important work in primitive times, for upon it the people depended for clothing, bags, babiche for snowshoes, nets, snares, rope, and cordage. The sale of tanned skins and babiche to the trading posts still constitutes a considerable item in the support of the household.

The hides of caribou, moose, mountain sheep, and mountain goat are tanned for clothing, while the skins of the smaller fur bearing animals, as the lynx, fox, marten, mink, marmot, squirrel, and rabbit, are dressed for blankets, robes, and head gear. Practically the same methods of treatment are employed to-day as in the past, and while an occasional iron tool may be found in use, implements of bone and stone, aboriginal in form and workmanship, are preferred.

The same methods are employed and the same tools are used in the treatment of caribou hide, moose hide, sheepskin, and goatskin; the latter two, however, are seldom tanned, but are superficially cleaned on the under side to serve for bedding and mats. Caribou and moose skins are utilized for clothing, the latter for the heaviest winter wear, for moccasins, and for the armored coat described on page 116.

The primitive skinning knife was of horn, or more often of a section of the rib or tibia of one of the larger animals sharpened at one end, and generally having a hole in the other end through which passed a string of hide for the purpose of sus-

FIG. 22.—Bone skining knife.

pending it around the neck or to hang it to the house post (Figs. 22, 23). It is one of the few Tahltan implements that generally

show a rude attempt at ornamentation in etched lines and geometric figures, rarely in animal forms, brought out more distinctly by filling the incisions with red ochre.

The skin is first cleaned of all particles of adhering flesh by hanging it over an upright post standing about three feet out of the ground, and scraping it with a hand fleshing bone, the tibia of the caribou or of the moose, but better still of the grizzly bear (Fig. 24, A, B). The scraping edge at the end is generally serrated. The skin to be tanned, if green, is moistened and rolled up

FIG. 23.—Bone skinning knives.

and allowed to remain for several days; or if an old skin it is moistened and rolled up, by which means the hair is loosened. It is then moistened again and placed over a section of sapling or half rounded tree trunk inclined at an angle of forty-five degrees and the hair removed with a bone shaving implement consisting of the tibia of the caribou, sharpened along the lower edge and used in both hands. This tool (Fig. 24, C, D) is practically a natural product, showing no attempt at workmanship

beyond the cutting edge, but it serves its purpose perfectly, and is much more popular than the bent iron blade in single or double form sometimes seen.

The skin is next dried in the shade and then soaked in water with the brain of the animal for one night, when it is taken out and washed. This process is repeated several times. Slits are cut close to the edges, around the entire skin, through which passes the line that stretches it on the dressing frame.

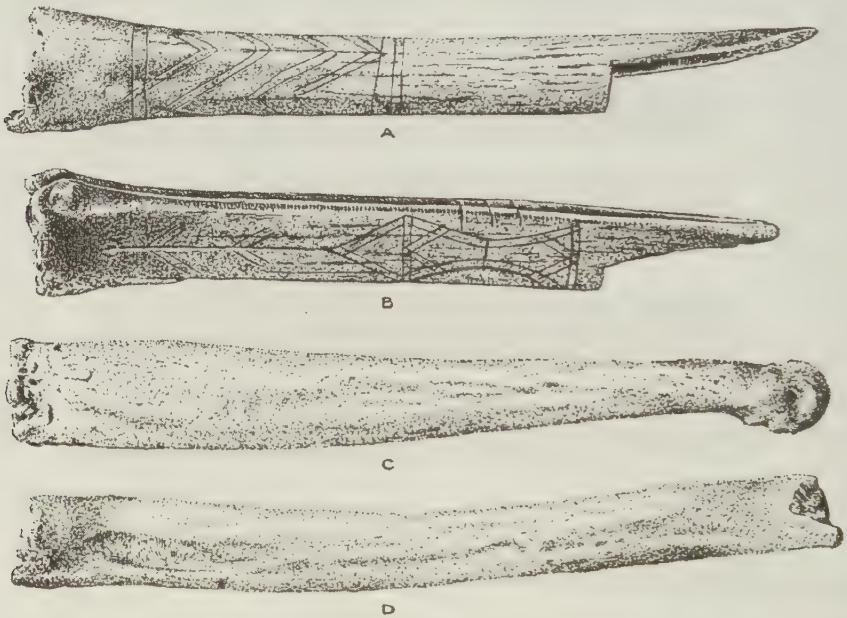


FIG. 24.—Bone fleshing and scraping implements used in dressing caribou and moose skins.

Before the introduction of iron these slits were made with sharp flakes of obsidian. The skin is now moistened, and, to soften it, rubbed with the brain or the liver boiled hard and reduced to meal. Sometimes a soft white clay procured in trade from Atlin is used in place of this preparation. The inner cuticle of the skin is now scraped off with the heavy chisel-like fleshing implement made from a leg bone of a bear, moose, or caribou, the blade of which is serrated to insure a better hold on the skin. This is the

most laborious work, and the most necessary to insure the best results.

After drying, the skin is next treated with a stone dressing implement, and rubbed and softened first on the flesh side, then on the hair side. This rough stone consists of the split half of an oblong, flattened, small boulder or pebble of a character that can be picked up almost anywhere on the trail. The rounded working edge, if too sharp, is blunted to prevent it from cutting or tearing, for the use of this implement is simply for the purpose of softening the skin by rubbing and pressure. It may be necessary to chip the edges slightly to produce the desired shape, for in use it is inserted in the split end of a stick about four feet in length, and secured in place with a temporary hide lashing, as the handle is not carried from place to place although the stone blade is retained. Hand dressing stones, not hafted, used in the treatment of smaller skins, are of the same general character, but oval or circular in form because more convenient to grasp. Such implements are of very simple construction. A pebble of the desired size and shape being selected, it is placed on end and struck with a heavier pebble which causes it to split in halves along the natural line of cleavage of the broader faces, thus furnishing one or two suitable pieces that need only a few strokes of the chipping stone to bring them to shape. Of all implements these dressing stones are the most frequently met, as they are readily procured and are in constant use. Smaller ones are sometimes carried in small skin cases in the woman's workbag.

The skin is worked again and again, moistened alternately, rubbed with brain, and dried until it is as soft and pliable as a piece of cloth; then it is allowed to dry finally, after which it is removed from the stretching frame and folded.

If the skin is to be smoked, it is stitched together lengthwise, like a bag, and fitted over a light willow frame of saplings stuck in the ground around a circular depression, the tops being bent

over and seized to one another. A fire kindled in the hollow beneath is later covered with decayed spruce and black pine cones that smoulder and produce a smudge, gradually changing the white skin to a rich brown.

Skins of the smaller fur bearing animals, which are used for making shirts, blankets, and robes, require little labor in dressing, if the animals are killed in season, and the skin is carefully removed; for except in the case of the marmot they are very thin, and need only to be cleaned, washed, and softened, with the least possible work. The process of scraping is performed with the flat bone skinning knife, which for this purpose is notched along the working edge, while the softening is done with the hand dressing stone already described.

At Tahltan and at the principal winter camps, permanent dressing frames for the treatment of moose and caribou skins are erected. They consist of two stout uprights, firmly planted in the ground (*AA*), each of which is supported by two braces (*BB*), and a horizontal bar that rests in the crotch of the braces against the upright (*C*), where all are secured together by a stout lashing. Near the ground another cross-bar (*D*) is lashed to the uprights. To accommodate the frame to a skin of any size a horizontal bar (*E*), suspended by two ropes from the upper bar, can be raised or lowered to any height. A perpendicular pole (*K*), adjustable laterally to any distance desired is lashed to the movable and the lower horizontal bars (See Fig. 2, p. 33).

Babiche, which serves for snowshoe netting, bags, beaver and fish nets, cordage, and thong, is made from caribou skin, dehaired, cleaned, and cut when wet in sizes according to its use. A strip is cut around the inner circumference of the skin in a continuous length, which is tied in a bundle and stored for use. At the present time a small straight-bladed steel knife is employed, but before the introduction of iron an obsidian chip or knife was used.

FISH AND FISHING

After the spring hunting the people return to the permanent villages, as the animals are with young and in poor condition, and their pelts valueless. Then follows a period of rest and relaxation after the long, severe winter season, when the temperature frequently registers −50° F.

In this inland country spring breaks while the coast, with its comparatively mild climate, is still enveloped in snow. This difference is most noticeable in coming from Wrangel by the Stikine as late as June. When the flats of the lower river valley are buried beneath two or more feet of snow and the chill of winter is in the air, the land beyond the cañon is taking on a shade of green, the air is soft and fragrant with the awakening of spring, which gets into the blood of the people and drives them out of their houses to the fishing grounds to await the coming of the salmon.

Five varieties of salmon come in from the sea and ascend the river to spawn during the summer. The first to appear, in June, is the king salmon, the largest and the most esteemed for cooking while fresh; and this is followed in succession by the small silver salmon, generally known as the sockeye; the humpback; the dog salmon, and the coho, besides several varieties of trout. Of these the sockeye is the main source of supply, from its greater abundance, and being a dry fish it cures readily. All varieties, however, are taken and eaten fresh, and greatly enjoyed after the winter diet of meat. In the days of primitive arms and appliances, when animals were more difficult to secure, the Tahltan were probably much more dependent on fish as a staple, as the supply never wholly failed, and fish were more easily captured than mammals. In the vicinity of old living and fishing places there may still be seen cache pits of considerable size where the catch was preserved for winter use. These caches were square pits of fair size, floored and lined with small saplings. After the fish were packed away, a covering of saplings

and bark was laid over, on top of which were placed tree trunks, and all was concealed beneath an upper layer of earth and leaves, so that in event of a raid by hostile people and the destruction of the village, this source of supply would escape detection. The earth covering was also a protection against forest fires that have devastated this interior country from time to time. To-day the Tahltan eat fresh salmon throughout the summer season. They dry and smoke a certain amount, but the latter is traded and used as dog food rather than for their own consumption.

The Stikine river and its tributaries are swift streams, rushing through deep gorges with precipitous walls and offering few vantage grounds for fishing. When such occur, however, summer huts of sapling, roofed with bark and branches are built and these serve likewise for smokehouses. In streams of such swiftness as these, fences and traps are impossible, and in muddy water the spear is equally useless, therefore the gaff hook is to-day the main implement for fishing. This implement is similar to that used by the more southerly Tlingit, and consists of a pole armed with a sharp pointed detachable iron hook, which, by means of a couple of feet of hide line, is permanently attached to the fifteen foot shaft. When the fish is struck the hook detaches itself and remains attached to the pole only by the line. I believe that before the introduction of iron a similar hook was fashioned from caribou horn.

Formerly gill nets of twisted sinew and babiche were used for catching small fish in the lakes. Scoop nets of the same materials were used. The smaller streams were fenced for fishing, and long slit baskets with narrow conical mouths were placed at openings left for the purpose. The fish in their upward passage entered these baskets and were thus confined. At one point in the main river known as Ge-kah-ne-gah, where the water flows through a narrow and shallow passage, cylindrical rod baskets each with an inverted cone within the mouth were weighted down, and when filled were lifted and emptied. In

the lakes several varieties of fish were taken, the most esteemed of which were whitefish and trout.

Spears of several varieties were formerly employed in fishing at different seasons. A salmon spear of primitive type was described to me by the Tahltan, but no example of it could be found. It consisted of a blade made of mountain goat horn, about three inches in length, pointed at both ends, and sharpened along one edge. A line of twisted sinew or hide passed through a hole about the center and was secured to a twelve-foot shaft near the head. One end of the toggle-like blade fitted in a socket in the end of the shaft, and in use, when the blade was driven into a fish, it was released from the end of the pole, and the strain on the line tended to turn the blade at an angle and prevent its withdrawal.

A type of spear for lake fishing through the ice is common to the entire country back of the coast range, and has been adopted by the Chilkat. It consists of a fifteen foot pole, to the end of which is lashed two short arms of tough wood or horn. At the end of each arm is a barb of horn, latterly of iron, lashed with sinew or hide, and a sharp pointed bone projects from the shaft-end, almost meeting the barb points The fisher stands over a hole in the ice, through which a bait of salmon eggs has been lowered, and as the fish comes directly beneath, it is speared. These holes in the ice are made with a pointed section of caribou horn, one old specimen of which was fortunately found in an old fishing house on Tahltan river.

The salmon is split and cleaned, the head cut off, the backbone removed, and the flesh scored and sundried for a day or two, and then hung on drying frames over a slow fire of willow or cottonwood in the curing houses. These frames are built in two or three tiers. The fresher fish are placed nearer the fire, and after a day or so they are placed on the tier next above until thoroughly cured, when they are tied up in bundles and stored in the caches or small storehouses for winter use.

Trout of several varieties, including the Dolly Varden,

cutthroat, rainbow, and lake trout, are taken with a gaff hook similar to the one for salmon described above but of smaller size. They are also caught in traps, baskets, and nets, and with a rude wooden hook barbed with wood, bone, or metal, baited with salmon eggs or meat.

Large fish, when caught, are killed with a small wooden club consisting merely of a section of sapling, free from any attempt at ornamentation.

GAMBLING

With that tendency toward adoption that characterized the Nahane, the Tahltan have sacrificed all their own games of chance in favor of modern cards. Gambling implements of the past were found among the rubbish of the cache houses, at the bottoms of old chests, and in the forgotten débris of the dwellings. More difficult still was it to obtain accurate particulars concerning the games themselves, for the men of the present generation in their desire to be considered as the white man disclaim any knowledge of the past, while the memory of the older people is not always dependable, although only the native games were known prior to the Cassiar gold excitement of 1874, which event strongly marks the past from the present.

Three different sets of implements were employed in gambling, all of which are common to the whole northwest coast, and two of them to an extended area of the interior, hence it is reasonably certain that none of them originated with the Tahltan.

The game of *tse-teh-lee* was played with a number of small, rounded, marked sticks, of the finer grained woods of the country, as maple, birch, ash, and sometimes spruce or willow, neatly fashioned to a definite size, smoothed with the native "sandpaper" of equisetum stalks, and painted in red and black encircling lines and bands of different widths variously placed. These markings determine the values and the names of the sticks. The value is fixed, and is represented by one character

in each color on two sticks of a set, which are named *eh-kah*, "feet." These might be designated trumps as they are the winning sticks in the play. All the other marked sticks are termed *tchar*, "painted." In value they are equal to the plain ones, of which there are generally a few in each set. The painted lines and bands (Figs. 25–28), which in a number

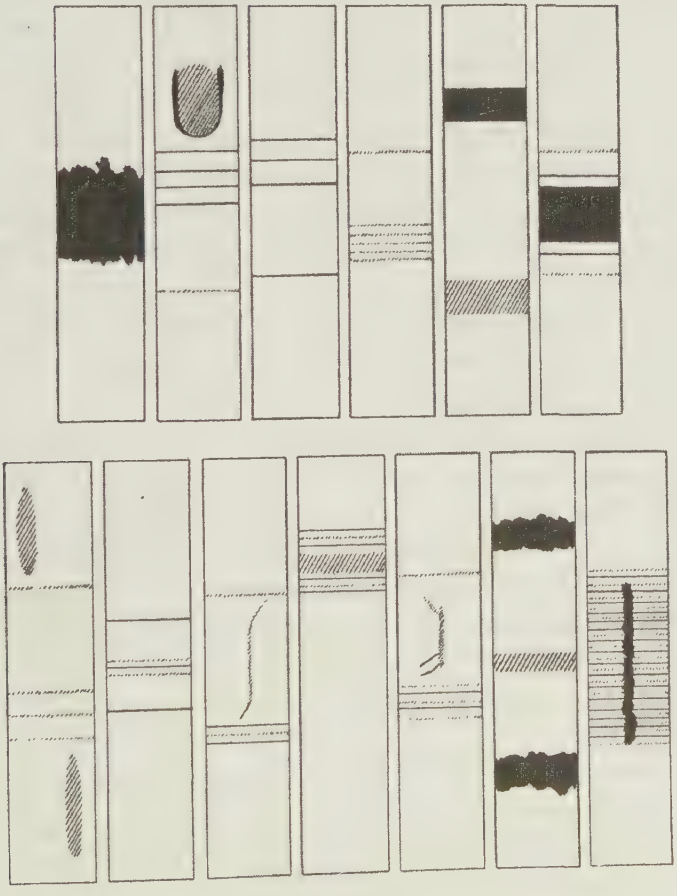


FIG. 25.—Gambling sticks.

of sets show only slight differences, give to each stick its name, but this does not affect its value in the play. These names are purely individual, given at the will of the owner, and

are those of animals, parts of the body, and natural objects. While some marks are generally recognized by the same name, they follow no fixed rule, and this makes it impossible to identify them except through the one who has used them. In almost every set a few of the sticks are painted in picture designs, in red and black, entirely distinct from the encircling lines, which affect neither the value nor the name. These characters are entirely decorative and represent graphically or symbolically some animal form or natural object intimately associated with the life of the people (Pl. XIX). While these crude drawings sometimes rudely depict the object, generally they are in simple lines, sketchy and without apparent meaning; but to the older people they seem to convey distinct impressions, suggesting the existence of a system of picture writing in the past, which the Nahane are said to have practised. The sticks are slender, and the ends are squared or bluntly rounded. Those that have been used for a great length of time have received a fair polish, but all are well finished.

The gaming sticks are in double sets, each numbering from eighteen to more than thirty. Each set is carried in a cylindrical pocket in either end of a caribou skin band that serves as a carrying strap for the hand or to throw over the shoulder. The bags are generally trimmed with a strip of colored cloth and edged with beads, and in some instances are decorated with dentalium and tufts of yarn. The double set of gaming sticks and the peculiar carrying bag I have never met with elsewhere (Pl. XIII).

A necessary adjunct of the gambling sticks is a strip of hard tanned bear skin, about forty inches in length by ten inches in width, upon which the sticks were thrown in play. When not in use the skin is kept rolled around the shredded bark or hay in which the sticks are wrapped when in play, and is tied around one end with a hide string

Before describing the manner in which the gaming sticks were used, it might be pertinent to compare them with those of

the coast, in contradiction of the theory that they were borrowed from the people of the littoral, from whom the Tahltan have adopted so much.

In material each people used the finer woods of their own country, which, except for the maple and the spruce, are very

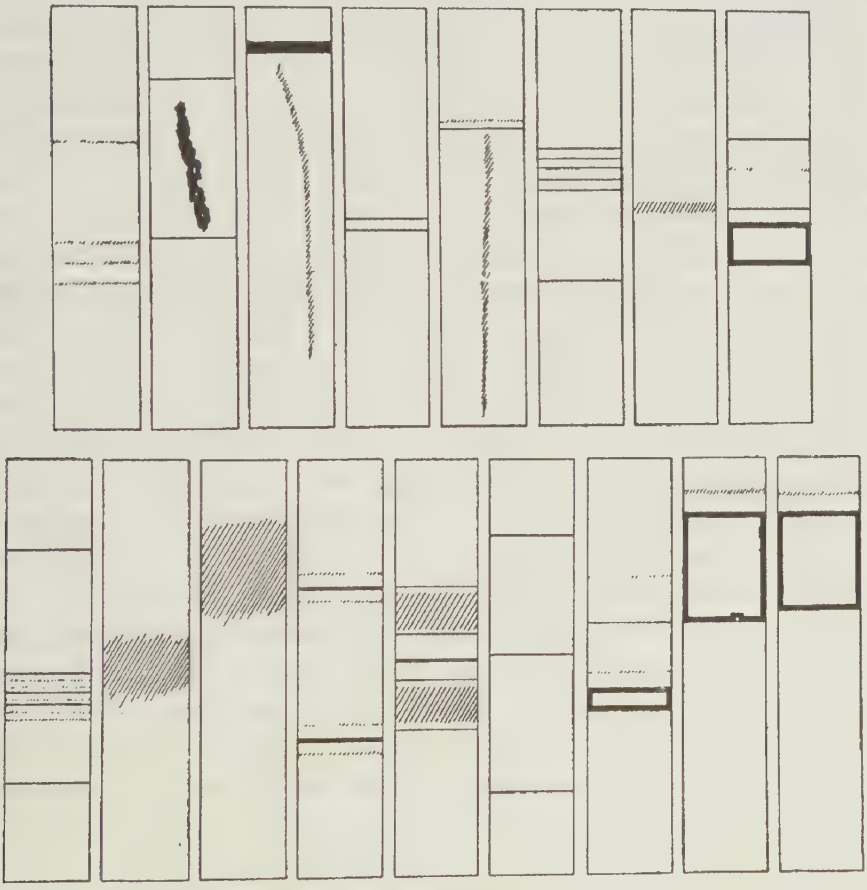


FIG 26.—Gambling sticks

different, and the maple is little found on the islands. The Tahltan gaming stick is uniformly slender and is squared or bluntly rounded at the end, while that used by the coast people is always thicker (sometimes two or more diameters larger), and the

ends are often ornate, pointed, nipple-shaped, rounded, hollowed, and sometimes inlaid with shell. While the encircling lines bear a general resemblance, they are characteristic with each people, the arrangement being entirely different, and the rude pictography of the Tahltan sticks is archaic when compared with the artistic burnt and incised conventional designs of some of the coast sets, which also are often inlaid with shell and bone. The carrying bag of the Tahltan, as above noted, is unique both in its double arrangement and in its connecting strap, while the skin bag of the coast has but one pocket which is covered by a flap or wrapped around by the extension of the back of the bag that is carried to some length as a band. The number of sticks in the coast sets average many more than the number in the two sets of the Tahltan, reaching, in some instances, eighty or more. The strip of bear skin on which the sticks are thrown when played is replaced on the coast by a square or folded mat of heavy hide, cut or painted in totemic design. The Tahltan have no counterpart for the strip of caribou skin with the hair intact, and fringed and often painted along the sides, which the coast people roll around the paint sticks and the shredded cedar bark. So that it would seem that this game came to the Tahltan from some place other than the coast.

The game is played by two men seated opposite to each other. Each player is provided with his own paraphernalia, and carries several sets of sticks, which he uses as we do cards, throwing aside one set and taking up another for "better luck." The bear skins are stretched between the players. The sticks, in two bundles of plain and marked ones respectively, are placed within easy reach at the left, and a small bundle of shredded bark or fine hay is before each player. The dealer now takes one of the marked, or "trump," sticks, *eh-kah*, and three other sticks, wraps them in hay, and places them separately on the bear skin in front of him in four bundles. The opponent next points to one of them, indicating the bundle which he believes to contain the trump. The dealer then takes it up, and also a

lot of ten or twelve of the other sticks, forces the former through the hay among these, and manipulates them with both hands, jostling them around; he then takes out one stick at a time, throws it down on the bear skin, and calls out the name if a marked stick, until he comes to the trump or has exhausted the bundle. If the trump is not shown, the opponent guesses again, and the process is repeated; and if the trump is not disclosed, he again guesses, and, if not successful, the dealer wins a half of the entire stake. The trump is now taken up by the dealer, and one other stick is taken from the pile to the left; each is wrapped in hay, and the two are placed separately in front of the dealer. The opponent now guesses which is the trump, and as before the concealed stick is forced into and manipulated with a bundle of other sticks and cast down on the bear skin, and if the trump does not appear, then the dealer wins half of the remaining stake, and the whole process, with the four sticks, is repeated, then with the two sticks. The dealer now sings, and if the trump is not guessed, the stake is won by the dealer; but if the opponent guesses the trump at any time, the deal passes to him, although the amount won by the dealer is retained.

Another and much more complicated game was played for the writer by one of the few older men who still remembered the play of the past.

The players seat themselves as before, with the implements similarly placed. The dealer takes one trump and one other stick which he first wraps in hay separately, then in one bundle together under the hay in front of him; he next jostles the bundle around in his hands until the opponent calls "*Ha!*" when he removes the outer wrapping and places the two wrapped sticks singly in front of him. Then the opponent waves his hand to right or left, indicating which bundle he wishes taken up. The dealer takes also a bundle of ten or twelve of the other sticks, and forces the wrapped stick out of the hay and among the other sticks, and jostles them about, and as he throws down each

stick on the bear skin in front of him he calls out its name, if marked, until he produces the trump or exhausts the bundle. If the trump is produced the dealer wins once, and the process is repeated; should the dealer lose, the game is begun anew; but if the dealer wins the second set, then he takes the trump and

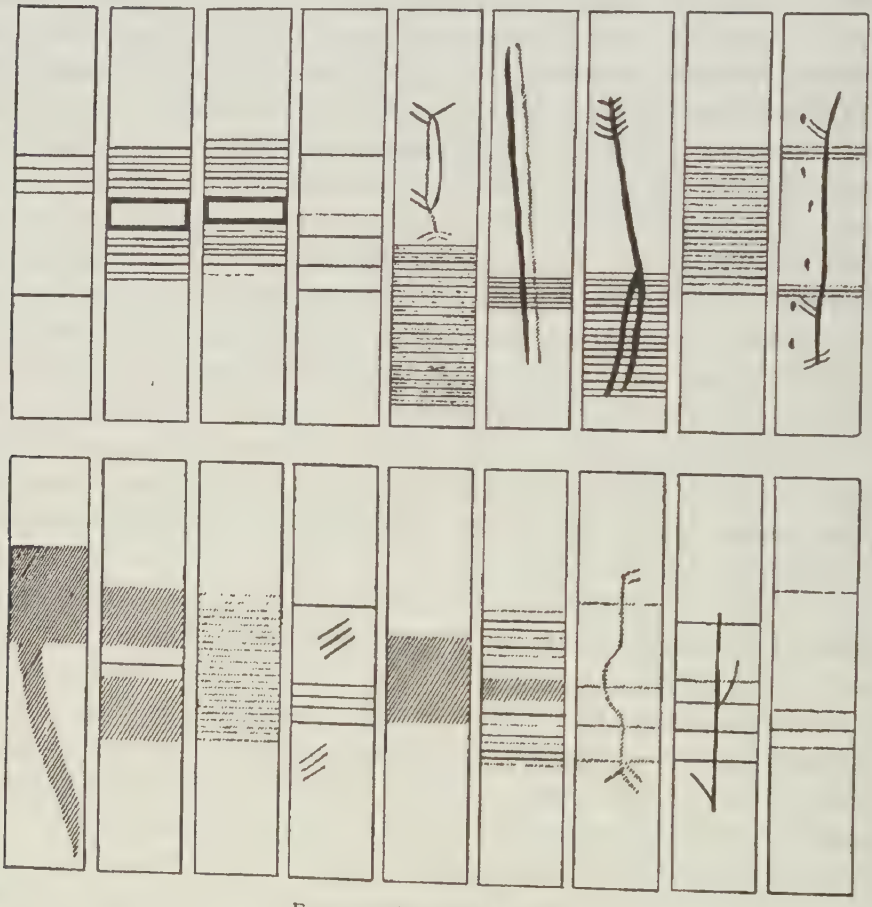


FIG 27 —Gambling sticks

three other sticks, wraps each one in hay, and places the four bundles in front of him. The opponent points to one which is taken up and manipulated with the bundle of sticks, as before described, and if it is not the trump, then the opponent indicates

another one of the three bundles left, and if he fails the second time to guess the trump, the two remaining bundles are taken up and jostled in the hands, and when the opponent says "*Ha!*" they are placed in the bundle of hay with the ends just protrud-

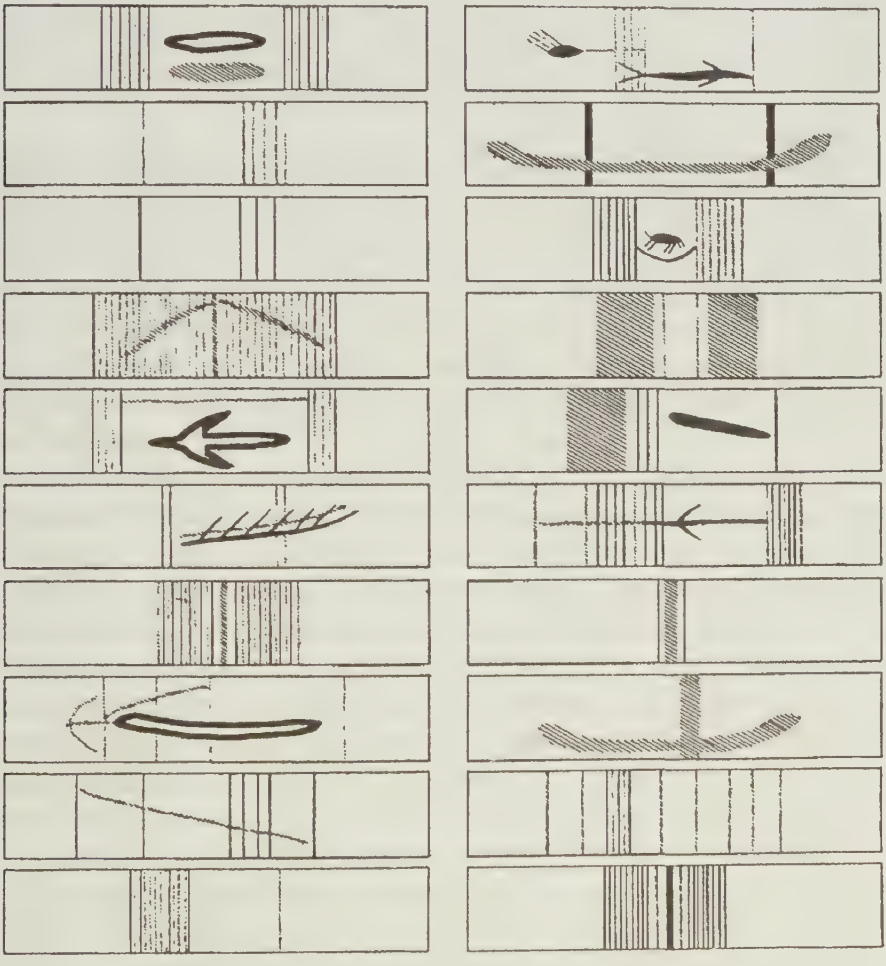


FIG 28.—Gambling sticks.

ing, and by a wave of the hand to left or right he indicates which one he wishes taken. As before, it is manipulated with a bundle of sticks, and if the trump is not produced when the sticks are

thrown down, the dealer wins and takes half the stake, and commences again with two sticks as at first; the production of the trump winning for the dealer, and if he wins all four sets in succession he takes the remaining half of the stake. But should the opponent win twice when two sticks are used, and again when the four st cks are used, he takes the deal and the game begins. It will be seen that in this game the trump is both a losing and a winning stick, losing when guessed with two sticks, and winning when guessed with three or four.

Possibly there were other variations of this game, but to-day even the older people have little recollection of it, and there was great difficulty in finding two men who could interpret its intricacies. When playing, the dealer sings, as in all gambling games. The songs have little meaning, just a word or two long drawn out, and often in a foreign tongue.

The game of *nah-ar*, the guessing contest of odd or even, is played with bone toggles, averaging three inches in length, but sometimes smaller. They are generally rounded, and tapering from the middle to the ends, which are usually blunt or rounded; but sometimes they are flattened on two sides and of the same thickness throughout. No unvarying shape obtains, and they do not exhibit great care in the construction. They are in sets of two and four, in which half are plain and half are distinguished by a few turns of hide or wire around the middle. Undoubtedly this game has been borrowed from the coast, and the finer implements are clearly of coast manufacture, the Tahltan work being noticeably crude.

The game is played by two persons or by any number seated on the ground opposite each other in two lines. Each player bets with his opposite, and the two stakes are placed together between them. The play is conducted by one side at a time, each man of which has a marked and a plain toggle which he changes from hand to hand or manipulates behind his back or under the blanket that covers his knees. Sometimes instead of two toggles the players use but one, which is passed from hand

to hand and serves the same purpose as the marked one. At a signal the hands of the players are produced and kept in motion in front of them while all join in an expressionless song consisting of a few long drawn out words in their own, or, very often, in the Nishka language. The leader of the opposing side with outstretched arm throws his hand to the right or left, at which signal all the players open the indicated hand in front of them, and according as the hands contain plain toggles (or if playing with a single toggle they display it), the guessing side wins that number, and loses from the plain toggles or empty hands. The difference in number between the two is indicated to the winning side by stick counters that are stuck up in the ground between the contesting parties. After every count the other side takes up the play, which continues until all the counters are accumulated by one or the other of the two sides, when the game is finished, and each man of the winning side takes the individual stake in front of him.

The counters, twenty or more in number according to agreement, may be small willow twigs a foot or so long, but the writer found a bundle of regularly cut stakes, pointed at each end, so that they could be stuck in the ground and the players could determine at any time how the game stood.

This game, with slight variation, is common to all the tribes of the northwest coast, and it probably came to the Tahltan from this source rather than from the interior. It is of later origin than the preceding game played with the small sticks, and is to-day well remembered by a majority of the people.

The only game of chance played by the women is known as *ketchee*, a Tlingit word referring to the hand and indicating the source of the game. It is played with a small die of wood or bone, and is a contest of dexterity rather than of guessing. The die is thrown in the air, and according to the way it falls it counts naught, one, or two. Small stick counters are used, and when one gains them all, the stake passes to her as the winner. Only a single specimen of die was found among all the

people. It is of wood, ornamentally carved in bird form, and most probably is of Tlingit manufacture.

Of children's games but little could be learned. In primitive days the Tahltan unquestionably had their time well employed in procuring the necessities of life, and the children from an early age had their share of labor to perform that occupied much of their time. Then their hunting, in small bands, and constant shifting of camp, all tended to retard the development of amusements. The girls had their dolls, which they have to-day. The boys played jump pole. They ran, they lifted weights, and they made bundles of the stems of fireweed or of brush which they placed in a thicket out of sight. This they tried to spear from a distance with sharpened sticks, the winner receiving a prize. In winter the same game was played, but the bundle of twigs was buried out of sight in the snow.

MARRIAGE

So far as the daughter is concerned, marriage is largely a matter of sale, for she belongs to the parents, more particularly in this case to the father, and is not consulted in the choice of a husband. Early marriage is the rule with both sexes, and this is generally consummated shortly after the girl is released from the confinement attending puberty, and the boy has attained maturity. Daughters are really more of an asset to the parents than sons, for besides the original price, or gift, if the wife proves satisfactory the husband honors the father-in-law with presents throughout life; and in the case of young couples, the husband more frequently comes to live with the wife's parents, thus adding materially to their support In the case of sons, if they are not given to an uncle to rear, they live with and assist the father until marriage, when their connection with their parents practically ceases. Referring to the customs of the past, the proposal of marriage came from the man, who communicated his wishes to his mother, married sister, or aunt, who in

turn went to the mother of the girl and asked her consent, at the same time intimating the number and value of presents to be made. This was discussed by her parents, and generally a demand for further gifts was made, and thus were the negotiations carried back and forth until an agreement was finally reached. The brothers or near totemic relations of the suitor then carried the payment in skins or blankets to the father of the girl and placed them before him. If he was satisfied the time for the union was named. If it was the daughter of a chief, or of a man of standing, he held a feast, assisted by his family, and to this feast the family of the prospective bridegroom was invited. When all were assembled, the presents were brought forth and counted. The bride-elect was seated, with her back to the guests, in a corner of the house, near the entrance, and was completely covered with a blanket of caribou skin, and thus she remained throughout the feast. At its conclusion she was taken by her mother to the house of the groom, if he had one; if not then to the home of the man's parents, where they lived for a short time and then returned and lived with the parents of the bride. Etiquette required that the young husband hold no intercourse with the mother-in-law; when one came into the shelter, the other would often leave.

Although the girl is not permitted to choose her partner, marriage seems to be as productive of good results among the Tahltan as elsewhere. Although exacting under normal conditions of climate and country, the life of the woman is by no means one of oppression, and her position in the household is well assured.

Polygamy was both permitted and practised, but it was not the rule, and it has now practically disappeared. The old custom of requiring the nephew to marry the widow of his deceased uncle on attaining the succession was instituted that the old wife might continue to enjoy the benefits of a home and the support to which she had been accustomed, for

she could inherit nothing from her husband's estate, owing to the social organization requiring her to be of the opposite totem. Such ill-assorted unions were generally responsible for the taking of another wife more congenial in point of years. Another reason for plural marriage was the privilege of hunting grounds and trade rights acquired with each wife. These advantages influenced intermarriage with the people of neighboring tribes, more particularly with the Taku and Kaska, whose language, customs, and pursuits were very similar, as well as with the Bear lake people, the Stikine Tlingit (with whom they constantly traded), and occasionally with the Nishka during periods of peace. On the death of the wife, should she have a marriageable sister the widower could have her at little or no extra cost. She would as a right come to him to supply the place of the dead in payment for the original cost. Divorce was not common. Indeed on the whole the domestic relations were and are as happy among them as elsewhere. Affection for their children is particularly noticeable, and this they richly deserve by reason of their unvarying obedience and helpfulness.

CHILDBIRTH

On reaching the period of confinement the woman seeks an outhouse of brush and bark that has been erected for her temporary seclusion, for both at this time and when isolated on reaching puberty she is considered unclean. In the retreat she is attended by one or more experienced older women In delivery she assumes a squatting position directly over a shallow pit that has been lined and half filled with soft moss, and leans forward with her arms over a stout pole securely driven in the ground at an angle, which relieves the weight of the body and allows the muscles to relax. If labor is difficult, the midwife manipulates the abdomen and assists the delivery; and in extreme cases it is said that the shaman might be summoned. Should this be necessary, he would come only to the shelter,

holding concealed in his hand an object believed to possess medicine, or magic power, as a bit of fur, or a bird skin, and, reaching in, he might touch the patient's head with his hand, after which he would quickly disappear. This, as the informant expressed herself, "would scare child and make it come quick."

Upon delivery the child is slightly washed in warm water, but in the past it was wiped with a soft rabbit skin, then wrapped in a light fur blanket and placed in a bark cradle lined with soft-ground moss (*Hypnum capillifolium* Wornstorf) which had been carefully picked apart and dried, and the whole structure covered with tanned skin or fur. Regarding the form of the cradle, some of the older people claim that the primitive cradle was a hammock of skin with lines of babiche, a type that survives in the blanket of commerce and the rope line that may often be seen in Tahltan houses to-day. Neither of these forms is ever used more than once, and when it has served its purpose it is hidden away, as the connection between the life and the cradle can never be broken, although growing apart with age.

After delivery the mother rests for two or three days, and is given no solid food, only a tea of herbs, of dogberry root, or of the inner bark of the spruce, and later a soup made of salmon and dogberry root which is believed to increase the flow of milk. When she is able to take solid food a fish diet is preferred, grease and fats being avoided.

The placenta (*ethone ke-thla-ge*) is often retained for several days, no attempt is made to expel it, nature being allowed to take its course.

The umbilical cord (*ethone elboola*) is tied with sinew and then cut; before the introduction of iron this was done with a rude knife or splinter of obsidian. The life of the child is foretold by the length of the cord, which, after it comes off, is dried on a stick, wrapped with fine sinew thread, sewed in a tiny sack, and secured to the cradle or to the clothing. The mother carefully preserves the sack until the child reaches maturity, when she hides it away in a crevice in the rocks, in the nest of an eagle, or in a

hollow tree. Its relation to the life always exists, although after maturity it is less considered. If it should be lost in childhood, a normal growth would not be attained. If it were purposely destroyed, misfortune, or death would follow. If it should fall into the hands of one evilly disposed, sickness could be produced that might result fatally; therefore, as my informant expressed herself, "that string is a child's life: that one thing they look out [for]."

The mother remains in the bark shelter during the two or three days following delivery, and then returns to the camp. She is still cared for until able to get up, and a wide abdominal band of skin is put on and worn until normal conditions are restored.

The child is given the breast as soon as the milk comes; but should there be any trouble, the infant is given to some other nursing mother in the camp. The child continues to nurse as long as it can draw any sustenance from the breast, sometimes until it is two or three years of age, when it is running about and eating practically every variety of food.

The husband is excluded from the presence of the wife during confinement, but he may visit her immediately after delivery. Before confinement, neither husband nor wife is permitted to eat the flesh of any young animal.

The Tahltan are a fairly prolific people. Four or five children are of common occurrence, and two old women were pointed out who had borne nine and ten children respectively. But their hard life, ignorance, and lack of sanitation have always been the means of retarding any material increase in numbers, the infant mortality being unduly great. Children are not "taught" as we understand the process; they simply learn from intuition and observation. In a working community every one finds employment. The little girls help their mothers greatly in caring for the younger children, and at an early age the boys trap and hunt with their fathers, so that as they grow they learn unconsciously the duties and habits of life until they assume the full

responsibilities that come with marriage and take their places in the family councils.

NAMING

Among those tribes of the northwest coast which acknowledge a legal succession in the mother's line and recognize an emblem of family that we commonly call a totem, the name is more than a personal attribute. It not only distinguishes the individual, but it identifies his clan or family, and tells of his social position and ancestry. So it will be seen that names are not given at will; they are inherited rights in the separate family divisions. Each has a meaning which more often refers to the emblem or to some incident in the life of the family, although from time to time individual happenings bring out new names.

A few days after birth the child is named after some maternal relation. This name is not of great importance, for while it makes clear the family connection, it serves only to distinguish the individual. A second name is given at any age from eight to fifteen years, and with people of the higher class this is done at the time of a feast, or memorial ceremony, given by the maternal uncle, who himself names the nephews while his sisters name the nieces, and these names are likewise of the mother's family. The baby name is now discarded, except possibly by the immediate family, and the new name is substituted as the more important. A third and more honorable name is taken by the individual himself on succeeding to the estate of a relative, when the memorial feast is held and property is distributed to those who assisted at the obsequies of the deceased whose name is now assumed. Another, the most honored of all names, may be taken later in life, that of some distinguished maternal ancestor or a great uncle or a great grandfather, but to do this it is necessary to give a feast and to present property to the opposite totemic families proportionate to the honor assumed. To this end the accumulations of a lifetime are sometimes distributed cheerfully, the giver accepting poverty for the remainder of his

days It can be seen how, during generations, names increase in importance, and each one endeavors to outdo the others in the distribution of property so that the old name may be still further honored in himself.

After the birth and the naming of a child the parents may become known as its father and mother. This custom is common among the Tlingit, and has probably been borrowed from the coast.

PUBERTY CUSTOMS

On the first appearance of catamenia the pubescent girl is separated from the family and is confined in a small brush or bark house in the rear of the dwelling. This seclusion covers a period of from six months to a year, and is more strictly observed with the daughter of a chief. Even to-day this custom is observed, but for a much shorter period, and a corner of the house may be partitioned off for the girl's seclusion to take the place of the out of doors structure formerly built. She is attended by her mother, aunt, sister or other female relation. The father is not permitted to see her for at least a month after the confinement and then but seldom. When taken out to walk at night she is completely enveloped in a caribou skin robe which covers the head and reaches to the ground. She wears around the neck a hollow tube, the tibia of the swan or a goose, through which she drinks. Were she to drink in the ordinary way it is believed that she would suffer from stomach trouble in old age. Attached to the tube by a hide string is a small pointed stick or bone with which to scratch the head, for during confinement the hair is not combed. Sometimes, the drinking tube is hung with beadwork which is purely ornamental (Pl. VIII, B, E). During this period of seclusion the girl's diet is generally restricted to dried fish and meat, although sometimes she is allowed fresh porcupine flesh and fresh berries. The uterus, the head, and generally the

feet of animals the pubescent girl is prohibited from eating; if the head or brain is eaten, her child will suffer from an abscess in the ear. If the feet of the mountain goat are eaten the offspring will be lazy and a poor traveler. Partaking of the beaver's feet will produce a stumbler, who can not run; and eating the fresh flesh of animals, besides being harmful to her, may bring bad luck to the hunter. During one of my visits to the Tahltan village in the fishing season, one family complained that they could not join their companions across the river, because a daughter of the household was experiencing her monthly sickness, and her passage over the river at this period would drive the salmon from the sea.

On being released, the girl's skin robe is discarded, she is given the sweat bath and then dressed in new clothes, the hair is combed, and the horseshoe-like beaded ornament (*mossth*) is hung around her neck, if she is of high degree, and a feast is given in her honor to which the opposite totemic families are invited. The neck ring is very attractive. The frame is of bent wood in the shape of a horseshoe, with a lashing of hide in the rear. It is covered with tanned caribou skin or colored cloth ornamented with dentalium, beads, or pearl buttons, and is hung with shell beads and tufts of colored yarn (Pl. VIII, A, C, F, G).

This ring, which is the most highly prized of the ornaments of the woman, is worn as a sign of maturity after the period of confinement following puberty, for about a year, but never after marriage.

If at this time the wearer wishes to speak with her brother or with a male of her own phratry, she ties a bit of babiche or sinew to the mossth.

MORTUARY CUSTOMS

As the Tahltan live their lives in the enjoyment of the few pleasures that come to them, uncomplaining in hardship and adversity, so they accept the end with composure and resignation.

Death is announced immediately by one of the men of the family in a loud voice from without the doorway, when all assemble and strike the ground with sticks, chanting, "if the spirit does not hear, he will lose the trail." Then pointing the sticks to the sky, they sing, "you take this trail [upward]; do not lose the trail." The death song is never used or even repeated on any other occasion.

The family opposite that of the deceased, that is the family of the husband or the wife, as the case may be, performs all the mortuary services. The corpse is laid out, and the arms folded over the breast. It is then wrapped in a skin blanket, tied about the head, feet, and middle of the body, and placed opposite the doorway, which is the position of honor. The family ceremonial pieces and some personal property are placed about the dead by way of display. The corpse is kept in state a day or two, and in the case of a chief, four days.

During this period the family eats but once a day, but those of the opposite family who have charge of the funeral arrangements and are preparing the pyre are given food two or three times daily. If the deceased is a married man, the wife cuts her hair and blackens her face, and keeps the face blackened as a sign of mourning for one year. Each night while the corpse is lying in state the family assembles and sings four death and family songs.

On the death of a brother they sing: "he broke his own canoe, my poor brother!" The words are long drawn out and repeated, and during occasional intermissions in the singing, the covering is removed from the face of the dead. Other words were used in the place of "brother" and "canoe" when occasion demanded.

Etmetah, the oldest surviving shaman, sung his family song in a language of some other time or people—it was neither Tahltan nor Tlingit:—"outside [referring to the coast country] is good; go you there!"

The funeral pyre having been prepared and all made ready,

the members of the opposite family assigned to the task, carry the corpse by means of two long poles, one on each side, which pass through the three ropes tied around the body shrouded in the skin blanket. It is never taken through the doorway, else the spirit of death will return to the household, but through the side of the house, or lifted through the smoke hole or through the corner of the bark shelter or tent, and a dog is thrown out after the corpse to prevent the return of the death spirit, and also ashes are cast out. The members of the household, in their oldest clothes and with faces blackened with a preparation of charcoal, balsam, and tallow, follow the corpse, which is placed on the pyre and slowly cremated. During this process the women relatives cry, while the men of the clan sing the family songs, and the women of the clan, other than those of the immediate family, dance in their slow swaying motion from side to side. Among the Tahltan the body of a shaman is cremated the same as the others

The charred bones are collected by one of the opposite family usually as soon as the fire has burned out, but sometimes not for several days, and are put in a box which is placed on top of a memorial column, on a crib of logs, or in a small box-like house situated on some prominent point on the outskirts of the village. That night the family of the deceased gives a smoking feast to the opposite family. Tobacco is thrown into the fire for the dead, and later a little food is given away to the guests. Generally about a year after death the family of the deceased honors the dead with a feast to the opposite family, when the guests in ceremonial dress sing and dance, first the women and afterward the men. Two years after the death a great feast is given, if the deceased were a person of standing, which lasts four days. The first day the guests dance and sing, first the women then the men. The second day the men of the family sing and the women dance, and a smoking feast is held, after which the guests dance and sing. On the third day the performance of the first day is repeated, and on the fourth day

payment in property is made to those who took charge of and performed the funeral and cremation ceremonies, when all obligations on account of the dead are discharged.

The Tahltan believe in many spirits. Big Raven, "*Cheskea Cho*," created the world, and when the people wanted game food they indicated their desire to this benefactor by burning eagle feathers and saying, "give me food."

Everyone possesses a spirit that is immortal. It is released at death and lives in an abode in the heart of the earth; but it is not confined to this place, as the spirits often return and inhabit the air around, and in most instances are born again in another of the same totemic family. In proof of this the writer was informed of a little boy who, in passing the grave house of an ancestor, turned to his father and said, pointing to it, "that is where I was once laid away." Another belief is indicated by the following narrative. A young girl just reaching maturity died. Her friend, about the same age, gave birth to a baby girl the following year, and in its coming the young mother recognized the return of the spirit of her dead companion. As the child grew she always preferred the parents of the dead to her own, and learned without teaching to call them mother and father, referring to her natural parents as uncle and aunt, while the younger sister of the deceased, although years older than herself, she always spoke of as her little sister.

These two incidents, insignificant in themselves perhaps, were given as evidence in support of their belief in reincarnation.

There is no recognized belief in future punishment, or in an abode of evil spirits. The only thing approaching this is when they speak of the spirit as "losing the trail," and it is for this reason that when a death occurs they beat the ground and sing to the spirit to "keep to the trail." As one informant expressed it, "the song is the same as a candle to light the trail." The concept of the lost spirit is very indefinite, it would simply wander aimlessly.

Generally the spirits of the dead are believed to be harmless, but there are maleficent witch spirits which live about the dead houses and are greatly feared. It is related that in early days four hunters were returning one night, and near the dead poles at the lava beds they heard voices, but could see no one. As they listened, they heard the words, "that [dead] house is filled and we can not go in." Then the voices sang.

"He's dead now,
He's dead no more.
We see him [and they heard the crying stick beating time].
Dead man you go;
This way is your trail!"

When the hunters reached the village they related what they had heard, and the following day they all died.

FEASTS, DANCES, AND OTHER CEREMONIES

The dances and feast ceremonies practiced by the Tahltan have been borrowed from the Tlingit. If they had any such ceremonies of their own, these have entirely disappeared and are forgotten by the living. Wherever the totemic system prevails, the death feast seems to occupy the first place, as it is designed to honor the departed and this is reflected on the whole family. The making of peace has always been regarded as an occasion to be celebrated with much formality.

The dances are given about midwinter, when the people have returned to the permanent village after the hunting season is over. The feasts occur at the close of summer, before the hunting season commences.

As mentioned in connection with the mortuary customs, the totemic family of the deceased entertains the opposite party which performs the obsequies and conducts the cremation, receiving food and tobacco. A year or two afterward they are again entertained and compensated for their services by the distribution of property, in return for which they dance. This

final feast continues through four days, and at night a smoking feast is held. This ceremony is called *Ten-ar-lee* (dance), and is participated in by men, women, and children.

The ceremonial dress, except that part procured from the coast tribes, consisted formerly of skin clothing worked in porcupine quill and colored with red ochre; furs, bird skins and feathers; but this has all disappeared, and in its place beaded bags, belts, knife cases, and head pieces of colored cloth are used. The stuffed body of a wolf, the emblem of the family, I saw in a house at Tahltan. It was carried in the dance and placed in a conspicuous place. I also saw several Chilkat blankets, likewise chief's headdresses with the carved mask surmounted by sea lion whiskers and with the broad band of ermine skins depending behind, and carved wooden rattles of the Tsimshian type, all of which had been procured in trade from the coast; but nothing of any artistic value original with the people themselves was to be found. In the dances a whistle of bone is used by the master of ceremonies as a signal.

The Peace Dance, or *Kau-ah-kan*, a Tlingit word meaning "deer," by which term the hostages are known, is wholly of coast origin. After families or tribes have been in conflict and peace is restored, this performance is celebrated by an exchange of two or four hostages, who are treated with the greatest consideration. First one side dances with its prisoner or hostage before the other, and then the other side performs, during four days, each party performing one dance a day. A free translation of a song accompanying this dance is as follows.

My brother was killed fighting.
And when word came to me,
My heart was sad and I wanted to die.
But now I am Kan-ah-kan,
And I love peace,
And I do not want to kill
Now any more
Now I do not bear hatred
Toward the one who killed my brother.

THE OTTER SPIRIT

The Tahltan have a strange belief in a spirit that they call *Kus-su-nar yar-za*, Young Otter. Almost every woman has one, two, or even three of these; the more one has the greater the dignity. If possessed of none, she commands little respect, therefore few if any women are willing to acknowledge this lack. The spirit generally acts for the good of the owner, but sometimes it may kill her. Living within her, just above the stomach, it makes itself known by a peculiar sound, and sometimes it rises to her lips, but is never seen, although some say that it has been seen when drawn out as a small black object. The possessor of a young otter spirit is always conscious of its existence. At death it escapes and seeks an abode in another human being. It is exceptional for a man to harbor this spirit, and it is not for his good. When he becomes possessed of it he seeks a woman doctor who can suck it from him through his lips, but only a woman having one already can remove it, and not all of these have the power. They do not like to speak of this to a stranger. It is not etiquette to refer to it, for it may offend the spirit and cause harm. Again it is said that only the shaman can treat this condition, and that once an otter not larger than one's hand was taken from a man. The ordinary treatment is believed to result in making the otter a good friend of the possessor. Dr. Ingles informed the writer that the manifestation of this strange belief is epilepsy.

The land otter has always been regarded with much superstitious awe and as sacred to the practice of shamanism. Before the advent of the Hudson's Bay Company it was never molested, and when the demand for its fur induced its capture, it was simply killed. The flesh was never eaten, the body never burned, nor the tongue cut, and it was never spoken of except with great respect.

SHAMANISM

Shamans among the Tahltan are born of ignorance and nurtured through superstition. They treat sickness not as of the flesh, but as due to the presence of an evil spirit within the body. Consequently they offer no material aid, but with the more powerful spirit that dominates them they exorcise the evil one that has entered the body of the patient.

Any one to whom the spirit comes in dreams may become a shaman. On receiving such a manifestation he goes out alone and lives in the woods for several months (some place the limit at four months), during which time he must exercise strict continence. He fasts during alternate periods of four days, drinking only a little water. During all this time he searches for a land otter, but if he can not find one he must be satisfied with a mink, a marten, a bush-tail rat, a frog, or some animal that is recognized as possessing a strong spirit (by reason of which such animals are not considered edible). When the animal is met with, it is killed and the tongue taken and concealed in a skin, fur, or feather bag, which constitutes his medicine, symbolic of his spirit power, hence he now controls the spirit of the animal which works his will. Having become possessed of a spirit, he returns to his people and announces his power. Cartoona, an old doctor, recounting the practice of early days, said that the novitiate during his period of fasting travelled the country over to find a pregnant moose, caribou, sheep, goat or porcupine, and then followed her to be present at the birth of the young, which he wiped with some twigs and then switched its legs to make it rise. He killed neither the mother nor the young, but in some unexplained manner he received magic power from his presence at the bringing forth of the young.

When one becomes ill some near relative visits the shaman and arranges with him to treat the patient, stating what quantity of skins or other property will be paid for his services. The shaman, accompanied by the men of his family, who carry his

dress and implements, then go to the house of the sick. Seating himself by the patient, the shaman, without speaking, sometimes fills his pipe and smokes; then he commences to tremble, which indicates that his spirit is manifesting itself. He now takes off all of his clothing, puts on a waist cloth, lets down his hair and sprinkles it with swansdown, puts on his head the neck skin and head of a swan or a crown of grizzly bear claws, and around the neck, mink or ermine skins, swan or loon necks and heads, owls' claws, bird skins, a rope of cedar bark or small spirit chains, each sewed in a tiny skin case. When these things are employed water must not be drunk. Sometimes the shaman's wrists and arms to the elbow are painted with red ochre. He again seats himself by the side of the patient, and after again trembling for a while, commences to sing. Those who have accompanied him, and are seated at one side, take up the refrain, keeping time with the beating sticks and a small skin drum. While the shaman sings only a few words at a time, the others sing and drum continuously. Then he rises and dances around the patient, his eyes closed or partly closed. He may carry any part of an otter, mink, marten, ermine, loon, raven, or hawk skin in his hand, and he may put this on the patient or touch it to the part affected. He may put his hand on the sick person, or his own lips to those of the patient, in order to draw the evil spirit from him; or he may call the spirit with a bone whistle which he carries in his hand. The performance may take place at any time of the day or evening, and it lasts from half an hour to an hour. When he departs he may leave at the side of the patient anything that he has worn or carried, for the purpose of keeping evil spirits from him.

If after several visits from the shaman the patient does not improve, the shaman tells the family that a witch spirit possesses him, and that until it is liberated nothing can be accomplished; then after further payment he points out or reveals in song the person who has bewitched the patient. In thus indicating the witch, an enemy or an inoffensive person is usually made respon-

sible, and he is forthwith bound and placed in an outhouse without food. If the patient recovers, the accused person may be liberated, but if he dies, the one charged with the sorcery may be killed.

Should the patient recover and live for a year, the shaman retains the payment, but if he die within that period all of the property he has received in payment for his services is returned to the family.

Several of the old shamans still remain, but they have generally abandoned their practice, except in a mild form to treat some old unregenerate who still adheres to the customs of the past. An instance is recalled of an old chief, crippled with rheumatism, to whom the shaman had given small strips of the neck of the swan to bind around the arms above the elbows and the legs above the knees.

Regarding the witch spirit that causes sickness and death, the people know only what the shaman tells them for he alone can see this spirit, and if his power is the greater he can draw it from the patient.

MEDICAL PRACTICE

The physical treatment of disease or injuries is entirely distinct from the practice of the shaman. For many ailments the Tahltan gather herbs and root stocks which they prepare for both internal and external use. Knowledge of the preparation and application of these nostrums is possessed by all, but some of the older women are regarded as authorities. For inflammations of every description recourse is had to the lancet, which ordinarily is kept in the repair or workbag, and the puncture is dressed with bird's down. In the pure atmosphere wounds heal readily. When the disease is internal, and its cause not understood, it is attributed to the machinations of an evil spirit that has entered the body, when the services of the shaman are required.

For digestive troubles the stem of the soapberry bush

is boiled and given as a tea. For constipation bear grease is taken. For burns, spruce leaves are chewed and used as a poultice. For rheumatism, dog's hair is burned and the smoke inhaled under a blanket. Fractured limbs are set and bound in splints.

Of the many plants used for medicine, wild rhubarb root and the root and the stem of the devil's club are most freely used.

The old people say that when they lived in the open throughout the year, colds and the attending troubles were unknown.

Idiocy is believed to be produced in childhood or even later by the land otter eating food thrown away by the person afflicted or by his ridiculing an animal having a spirit, or by the killing of an animal having young, especially a bear or a mink and allowing the young to starve.

Idiocy at childbirth is attributed to a similar act on the part of the father at some previous time, consequently when an animal is encountered while carrying young it must be killed immediately, the front feet held tight in order that they may not move, and the throat cut quickly, otherwise the child of the hunter when born will develop convulsions. Deafness and dumbness are considered inherited from an ancestor owing to some neglect on his part in observing the laws governing killing the young of animals as above described.

WAR CUSTOMS

From the fragmentary stories of their fighting and wars it would appear that in early days the Tahltan were embroiled with their neighbors most of the time, and the names of a number of villages are remembered that were destroyed in these encounters. With the Nishka of upper Nass river they were constantly in conflict, and frequently so with the Taku over hunting rights; but with the Kaska, Bear lake people, and Stikine Tlingit their trade relations proved a bond of peace. Their last hostility was with the Nishka in 1862, since which

period peace has prevailed, although they speak of occasional trouble with the latter people.

It is likely, however, that time has greatly exaggerated the importance of these conflicts, and while at times considerable parties may have taken the field, it seems probable that ambuscades, solitary killings, and the sacking of half deserted villages constituted the most serious results of their campaigns. While the Tahltan are fearless hunters, it is hardly probable that they were ever a fighting people except when forced to assume the defensive. They claim to have used in war a defensive dress of hard tanned moose or goat skin, beneath which was sometimes worn an armor of wooden rods bound together with a twining of twisted sinew and goat wool cord in alternate bands, and headpieces of wood. Spears, knives, bows and arrows, were their weapons. Of these accoutrements nothing remains except the war knives, and most of these, judging from the fine workmanship and the elaborately carved and ornamental heads, are of Tlingit manufacture (Pl. XII).

Before going on war parties the shaman might perform a ceremony, calling on his spirits to aid the people. To the leader and other members of the expedition he might give some medicine charms, as a piece of fur, the head of a water bird, the claw of an eagle or an owl, a piece of obsidian, or the like, to protect them against harm; but he fought just the same as the others.

For war the face was daubed with red ochre and black paint, and they say the scalp lock was tied up. The custom of scalping was practised, all the hair being taken, and these trophies were displayed only at family ceremonies. An old native informed me that in war the body of the dead enemy was sometimes roasted and the warriors cut a mouthful from it not as food but to fulfill an ancient custom, but this no one else confirmed. Prisoners taken in war were made slaves, but could be ransomed.

Before going to war they hardened their bodies by morning plunges in cold water, but this was also done at other times.

LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

History and legends were generally known to all, but they were particularly in the keeping of individuals who taught them to the children at night about the fire. A few days after each lesson the children were all questioned and made to recite what they had been told, and the most apt pupils were given a thorough course of instruction. The writer's limited experience in this matter, however, led him to believe that the older women were generally the better informed in questions of history and legend, for in conversation with the men when relating old stories they would often appeal to the older women for aid.

In the legends of the Tahltan, the formation of the earth is not accounted for. In the beginning it was a chaotic mass of mountainous shore and ocean, without fresh water, and enveloped in semi-darkness. The elements, light, fire, and fresh water, existed in hiding and were zealously guarded by supernatural beings co-existent with nature, who resented the coming of man, and of whom little is known, for with the loss of their power they disappeared.

The mediator and creator appeared and wrested from the mythical beings the elements, which were given to the earth to make it habitable. He then made man. He often assumed the form of Cheskea Cho—the Big Raven—as he was called. The principal folk tales of the Tahltan naturally relate to the acts and wanderings of the Raven, but they are so similar to those of the coast tribes, which have been told often, that they may be presented here merely in outline.

Light was hidden in three bundles, containing the sun, the moon, and the stars respectively, and carefully guarded by the master spirit who had a daughter approaching womanhood, whose every movement was watched. The Raven transformed himself into a tiny leaf and dropped into the spring from which the water she drank was dipped with a basket, and although the leaf was detected and thrown away several times, the young

woman finally swallowed it. Thus was the Raven conceived and born again as her son. The grandfather became greatly attached to the child, and could refuse him nothing. He played with the bundles of light as a baby; but as he grew older these were withheld. When the boy became ill and cried incessantly for his old playthings they were given to him, when he released the light from the bundles and threw it into the air, to take its place in the firmament.

Fresh water was in the possession of another master, known as Kounugu, who slept throughout the day on top of the well that contained his treasure. The Raven came to him and asked for drink but was refused. Then he went away and catching a few drops of rain in his bill, hurried back to the water master and spat the water out before him, saying, "see, I too have fresh water!" After this he was allowed to remain working for Kounugu. Watching his chance when Kounugu slept, he rubbed dirt over him, and, waking him, told him to go out and wash. When the water master was about to wash his face Raven told him that he would do it for him and asked him to open his eyes. When he had done this Raven blinded him with urine, and quickly diving into the well, drank deeply of the water, but this so increased his size that he was caught in the smoke hole of the house in escaping.

Kounugu then built a fire of pitch kindlings, the smoke of which turned Raven black, for at first he was white. Escaping from the smoke hole, he flew over the earth, and wherever he let fall a drop of water from his bill, a lake, a river or a creek was formed. Fire was likewise released from its keeper and stored in the trees and the rocks for the use of man.

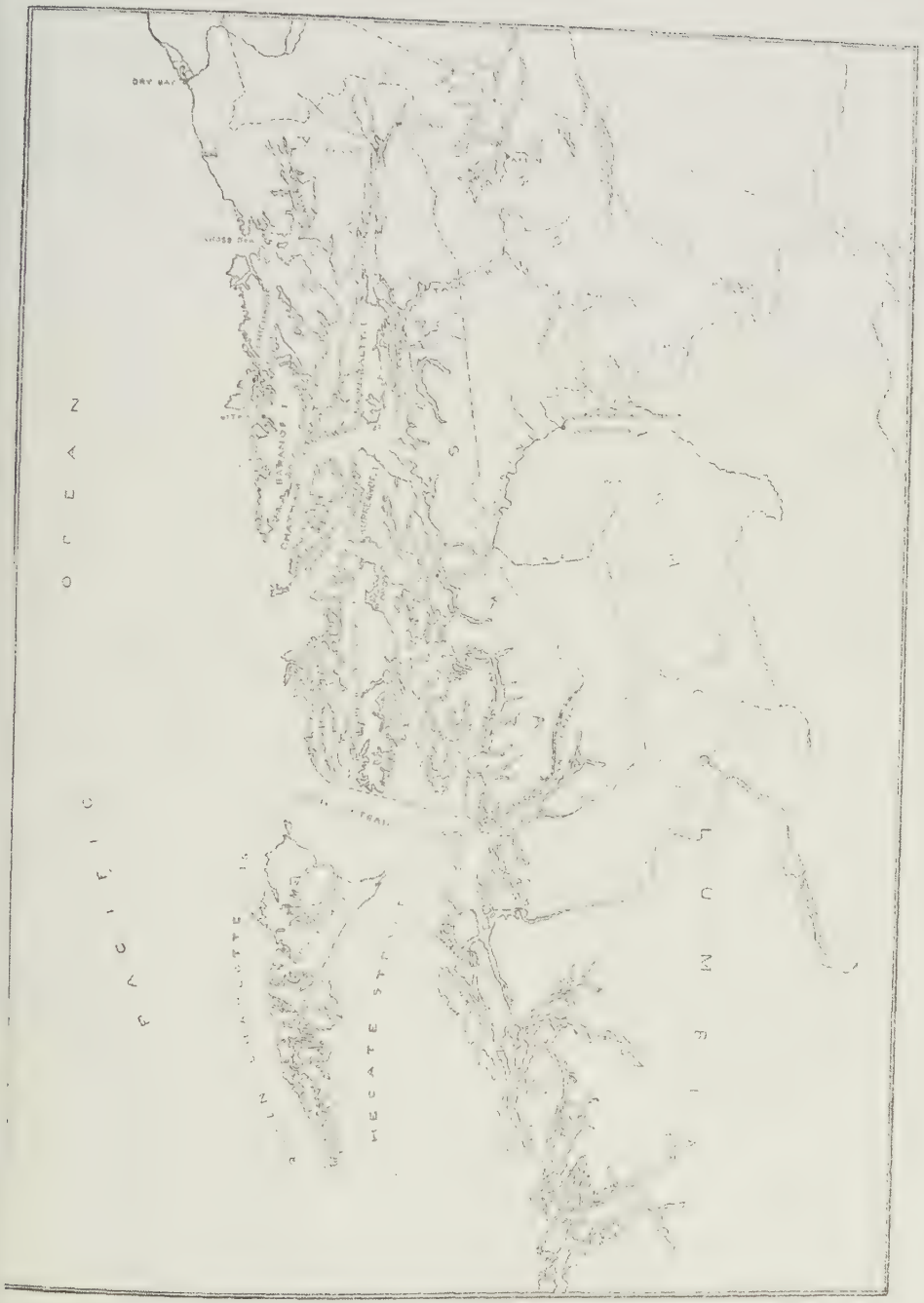
Now the earth was made ready, and animal life already existed; but Raven, wandering far and wide, became lonely for human companionship. He came to Stikine river above the cañon, and as he sat on the bank he saw a salmon jump. He was very hungry, but he had neither spear nor hook to catch the fish, so he talked to it, saying, "come here and hit me right in

the stomach." As he spoke the salmon jumped at him, striking him and knocking him over; and before he could recover himself the fish had wriggled back into the water. Then he thought to build himself a low stone wall at the water's edge (some say he dug a ditch), and standing within it he again spoke to the salmon; but when it again jumped at him it could not return to the water, and was caught. Raven then prepared and cooked the fish and invited all the smaller birds to a feast. When the salmon was cooked under the turned-up root of a tree, Raven took a piece of the flesh, and, talking to the root, offered it, saying, "*Nă N*^{e}," "here take it," but quickly drew it back, deceiving the root, which dropped back, covering the salmon, and although all the birds dug in the ground, they could not find the fish. Then Raven told the little birds that he was going to make man, but they did not believe him, and as he asked each one, "have you young inside?" they all answered, "no." Then he turned to the rocks, and the trees, and asked them the same question, and they both answered affirmatively, whereupon he told them that the young first born would be man; and they each told him that at the break of day a child would be born. And so in the morning the tree first gave birth, and the offspring became man, therefore as the tree springs from the seed, lives, and dies, so human life is but for a season. Following the birth of the tree, the rock brought forth its offspring, which was of stone and which was rejected by Raven as having everlasting life.

Following the creation of man, when the world was still sparsely peopled, came a long period of rain that covered the surface of the earth and destroyed many. The few that were saved climbed to the top of the loftiest peaks, and after the subsidence of the water settled the earth.

These stories of the Raven, the creation, and the flood are common to all the tribes of the northwest coast from Puget Sound to the Arctic, and are localized at many points. Hence it is certain that the Tahltan borrowed them from others. Their

great similarity to the stories of the Stikine Tlingit would seem to indicate that the Tahltan borrowed their myths from the same source as their social organization, their ceremonies, and so many of the customs that distinguish them from the more easterly and primitive Nahane.



MAP SHOWING A PORTION OF THE NORTHWEST COAST OF AMERICA AND THE COUNTRY INHABITED BY THE TAHLTAN.

PLATE I

Nan-nook head chief of the Tahltan.

NAN-NOOK, HEAD CHIEF OF THE TAHLTAN

PLATE II

Kaska John and his wife.

KASKA JOHN AND HIS WIFE

PLATE III

Koshon (old wolf) and his wife Thlogosqin.

KOSHON AND HIS WIFE THLOGOSQIN

PLATE IV

Three Tahltan sisters.

THREE TAHLTAN SISTERS

PLATE V

An aged Tahltan woman.

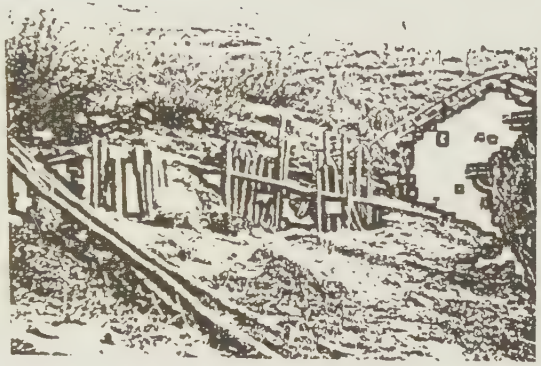
AGED TAHLTAN WOMAN

PLATE VI

A: Tahltan camp showing structure of sweat bath in foreground.
B: Tahltan summer camp.
C: underground dog houses in a Tahltan village.
D: house of bark and brush.

A

B



C

D

TYPES OF TAHLTAN HOUSES

PLATE VII

A: food cache with rude ladder made of a notched tree t
B: Tahltan woman and her dogs with packs.

A

TAHLTAN CACHE

B

TAHLTAN WOMAN AND HER DOGS

PLATE VIII

B and E: drinking tubes used by pubescent maidens.
A, C, F, G: collars worn by maidens after seclusion.
D: woman's ear ornament.

A
B
C
D
E

PLATE IX

A and B: ornamental bags of caribou skin covered with colored cloth and beaded. This article represents an original firebag which has degenerated into an ornament

C. packing bag of caribou skin with beadwork embroidery.

D: netted bag of babiche. This form of bag is carried by men to contain the provisions and necessaries for a day's travel. Also used as a game bag.

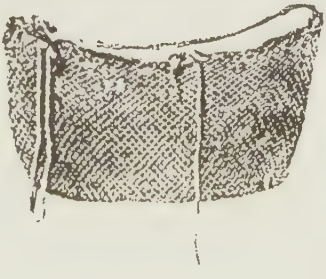
E: netted bag of cord made from the wool of the mountain goat. It is used for carrying fish.

A

B

D

C



E

DIFFERENT FORMS OF BAGS

PLATE X

Man's workbag with outfit.
1: knife. 2: snowshoe chisel. 3: awl. 4: whetstone. 5: beaver teeth used as a knife sharpener. 6: caribou sinew for making cord. 7: lancet. 8: paint bag. 9: bone drinking tube. 10: bone gambling toggle. 11: bone skinning knife. 12: bone attachment for pack strap. 13: powder flask. 14: piece of punk.

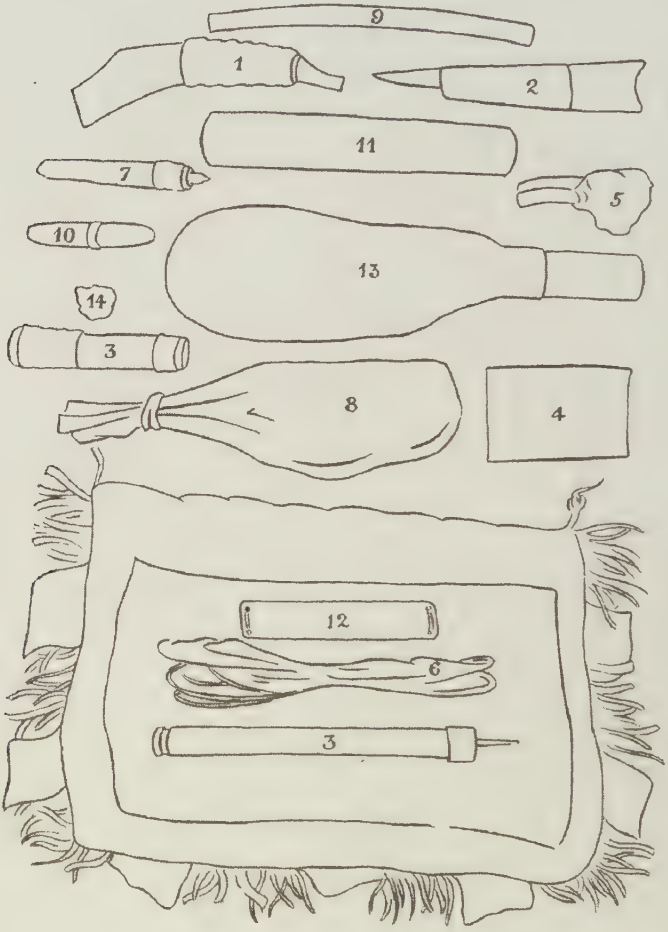
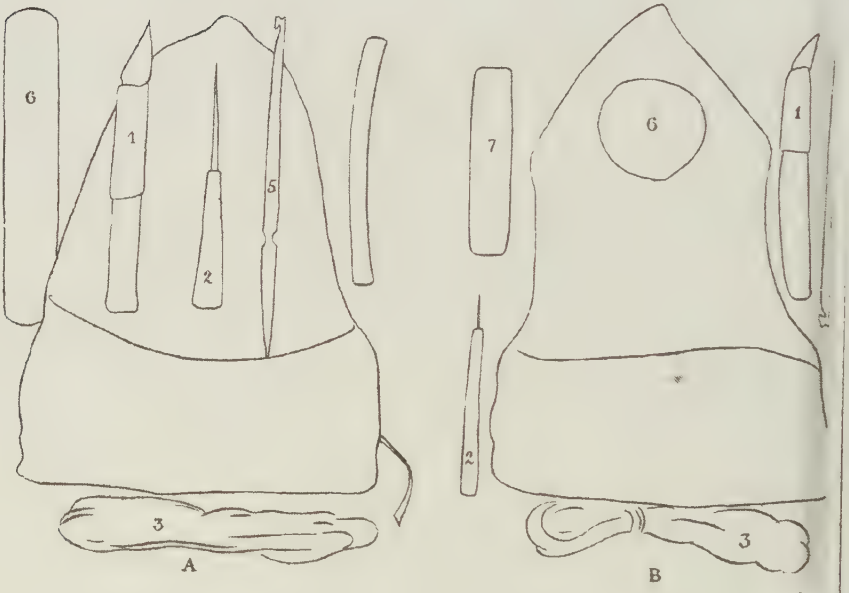


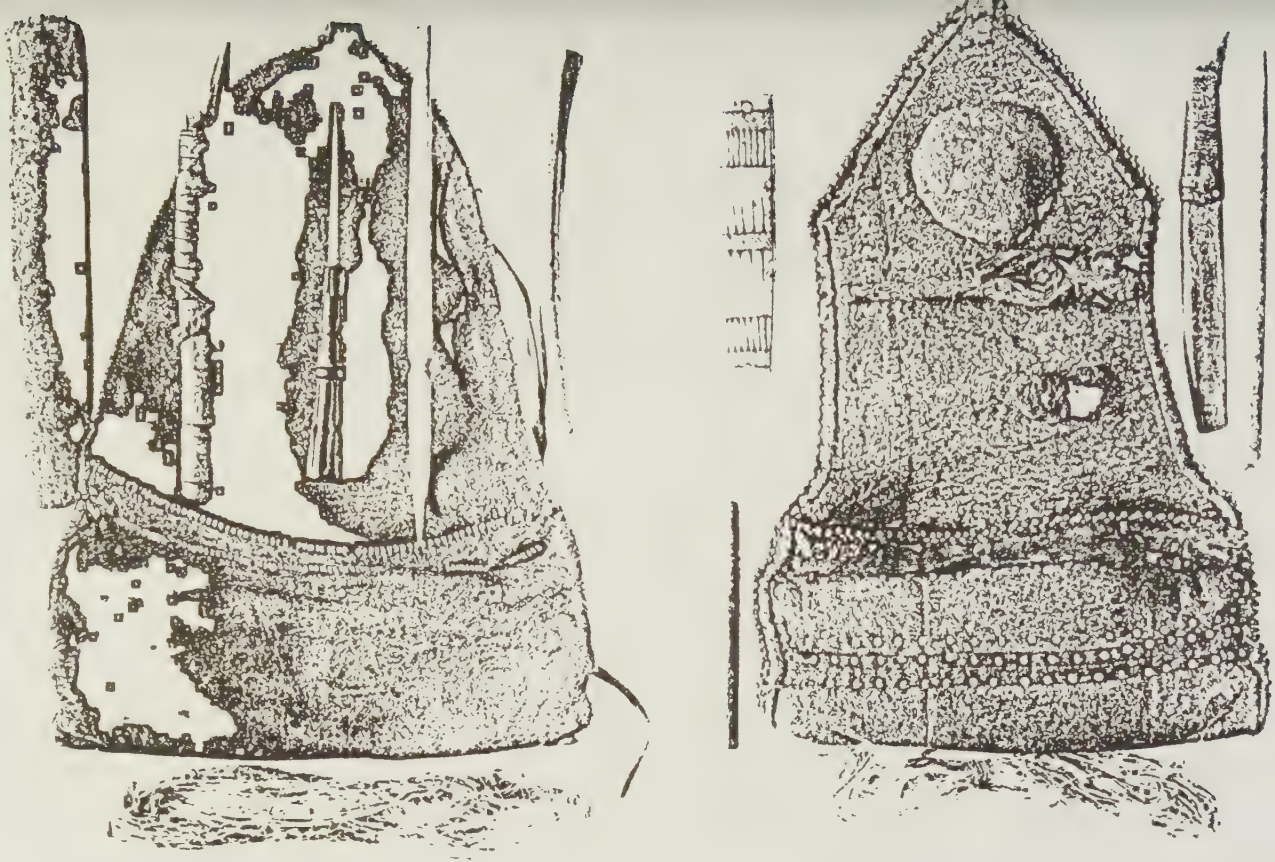
PLATE XI

Woman's workbags.

A, 1: knife. 2: awl. 3: sinew thread. 5: snowshoe netting needle. 6: stone implement for dressing skins. 7: bone attachment for pack strap.

B, 1: knife. 2: awl. 3: sinew thread. 5: snowshoe netting needle. 6: bone skinning knife and skin dresser. 7: bone drinking tube.





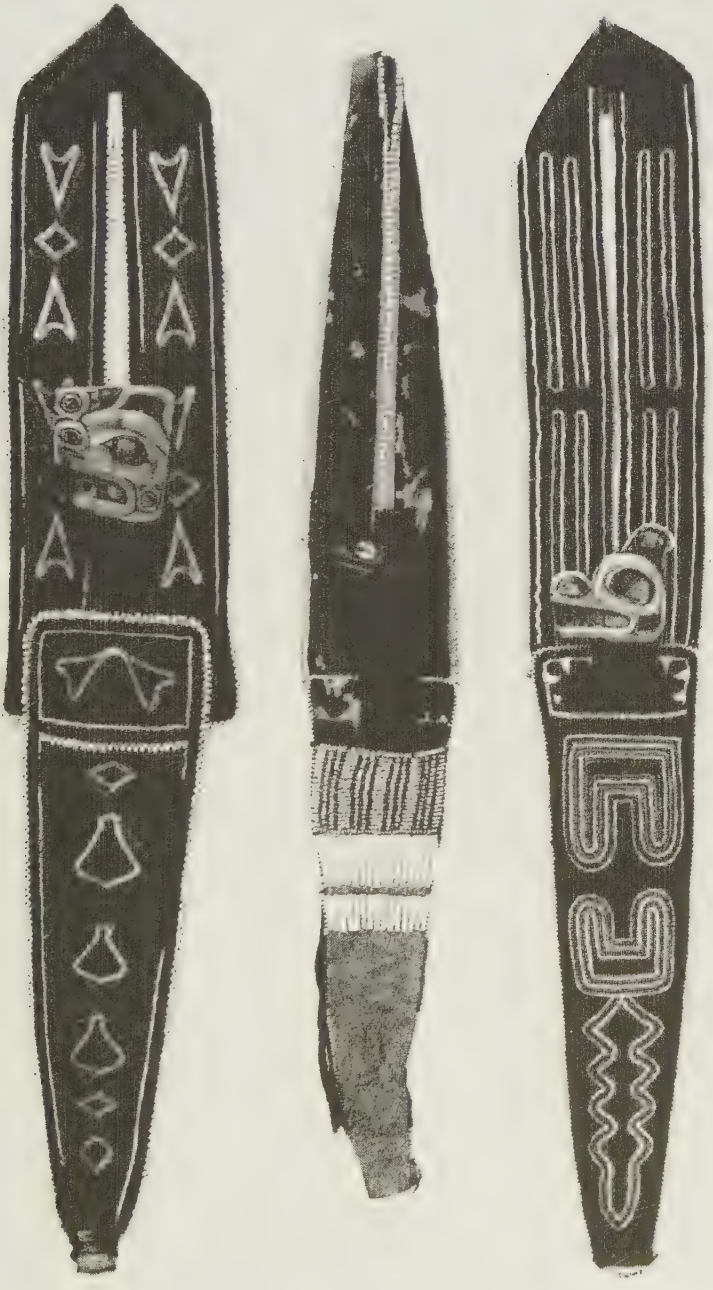
A B

WOMAN'S WORKBAGS WITH CONTENTS

HELIOTYPE CO. BOSTON

PLATE XII

War knives in sheaths of buckskin and cloth decorated with beadwork.



WAR KNIVES AND SHEATHS

PLATE XIII

Two double sets of gambling sticks in their carrying bags made of caribou skin ornamented with dentalium shells and colored beads.

GAMBLING STICKS IN THEIR HOLDERS

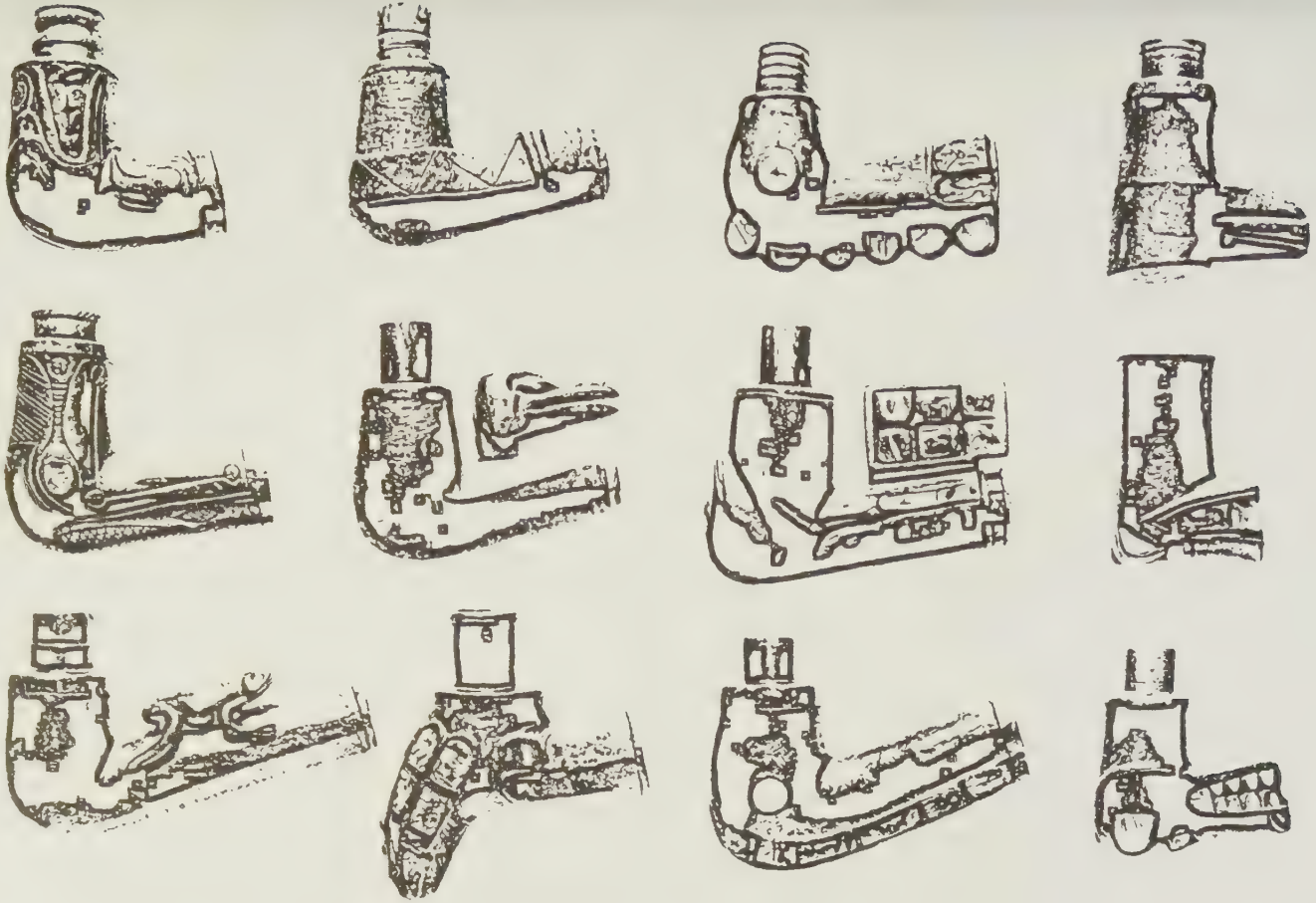
PLATE XIV

Three ceremonial bags of buckskin and cloth decorated with beadwork.

CEREMONIAL BAGS

PLATE XV

Tahltan pipes.



TAHLTAN PIPES

PLATE XVI

Ceremonial pipes used upon feast occasions. The ornamentation in carving and inlaying generally represents the totemic emblem of the family.

CEREMONIAL PIPES

PLATE XVII

Two ceremonial pipes. The upper one is made of walnut inlaid with haliotis shell and further decorated by carving. It was found in the possession of a very old shaman of the Tahltan in whose imagination it represents a beaver, the back bone being represented by the carving at the base which is inlaid with pieces of shell. The leaves and stems according to this interpretation represent the animal's food. This pipe like its companion is of Haida design and workmanship.

The lower pipe in the illustration is made of boxwood inlaid with white and black bone and further decorated by carving and painting. In shape it represents a canoe. At the fore end is an ivory figure which shows the bow man watching the water ahead In the middle is a miniature house with windows and lattice. In the rear is an ornamental carving, flower-like in design It was obtained from an old man at Tahltan who knew nothing of its history except that it had descended to him through five generations. It is unquestionably of Haida origin and is similar in design and workmanship to a number of pipes of both wood and slate in the U. S. National Museum gathered by the United States Exploring Expedition in 1841, in Oregon.

PLATE XVIII

Fishing village at the mouth of the Tahltan river, near the site of the first known settlement of the Tahltan people. The houses are built of upright saplings stuck in the ground and bound together with rope of twisted bark and roofed with slabs of spruce bark.

MOUTH OF TAHLTAN RIVER WITH FISHING VILLAGE

PLATE XIX

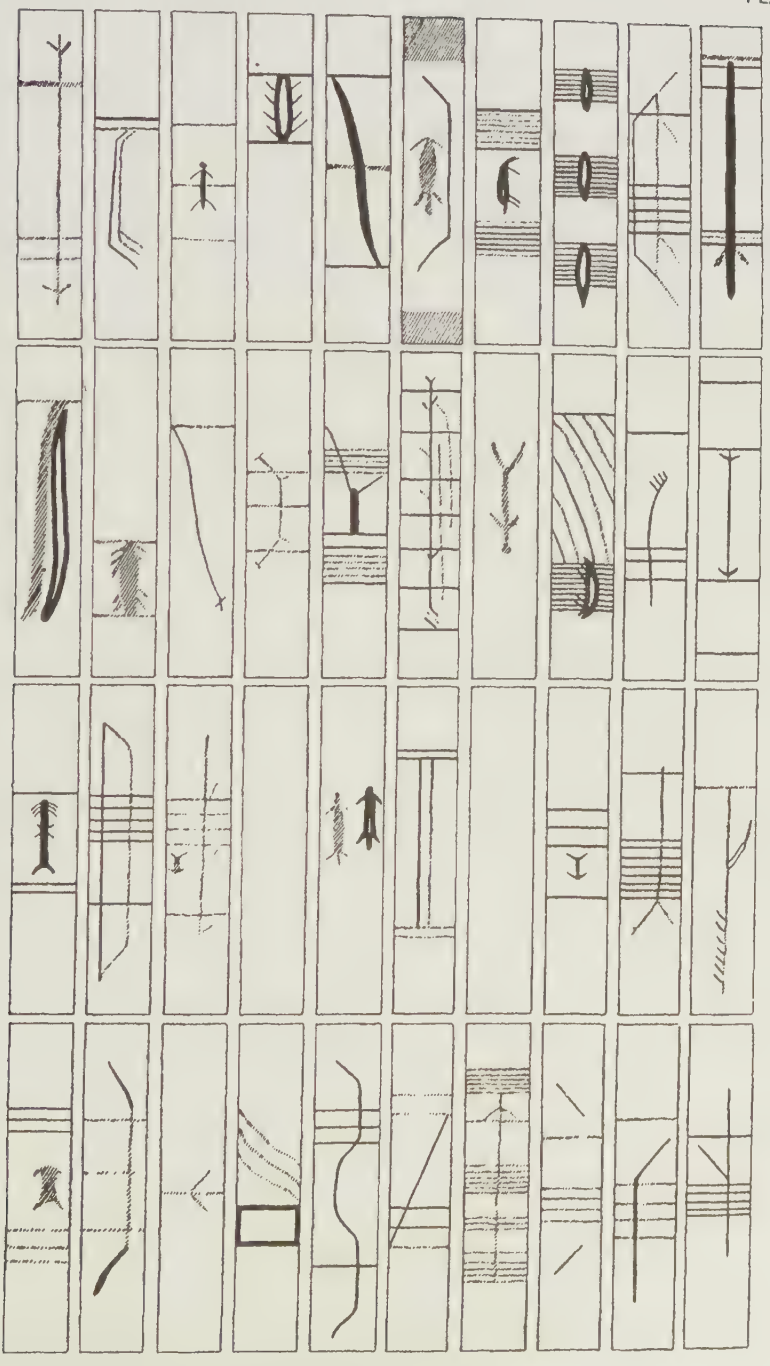
Decorated gambling sticks. The names given for the decorations are as follows.

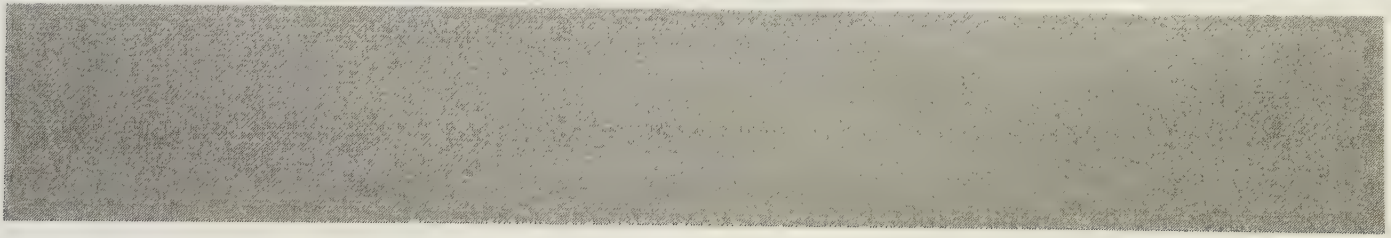
Upper row: arrow, canoe in water, man, fresh water crab, fire, bear in water, dog, lakes, leg, musk rat

Second row: fire, rock, man's eye, caribou horn, mouse, man's trail, man, osprey, ptarmigan arrow.

Third row: crab, porcupine hook, mink, ?, beaver, rope, ?, a stick across the trail, fish net, lynx.

Fourth row: fox, canoe, teeth, black bear, sheep, moose, arrow, belly, moose skin rope, ground hog





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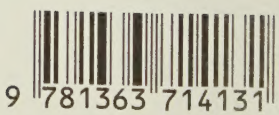

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